

Monday Night Raw – February 7, 2000: This Show Is So Excellent I Don't Have A Catchy Title For It

Monday Night Raw

Date: February 7, 2000

Location: Reunion Arena, Dallas, Texas

Attendance: 12,893

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

This is another request from about six weeks after the previous request I had. There have been some major changes, namely the arrival of the Radicalz from WCW. They're in the main event tonight (minus Eddie who broke his arm in his debut match with the company) in a ten man tag that you hear a lot about for reasons that elude me completely. Let's get to it.

Here's X-Pac along with Tori who looks a lot better in black and green. As they get in the ring, here are the Radicalz (Saturn, Malenko, Benoit and Guerrero) who say they wanted to get into the WWF but on Thursday, they weren't good enough to earn their contracts. Eddie thanks the fans (NOT FREAKING UNIVERSE) for their support and the privilege of performing in front of them. Benoit wants to thank the man that brought them here: Cactus Jack.

Cue Cactus who has just come off a masterpiece of a fight against HHH at the Rumble. Before Foley can say anything, here are HHH and Stephanie, who is still only 24 here. She says this is making her sick and makes fun of the Dallas Cowboys. Her acting is at its usual levels here. HHH says this has gone on too long so he wants Jack one more time. At No Way Out, it's Jack's last shot at HHH or the title. It can be any kind of match

Jack wants, but there are no sharp metallic objects, no 2x4 wrapped in barbed wire or none of Jack's sadistic toys.

Jack runs down the rules HHH just listed and says that he can have any kind of match other than that. He doesn't think that sounds very fun, but he has a good idea: Hell in a Cell. HHH says it's on but Jack's career has to be on the line, and that means all incarnations of Foley: no Dude Love, no Mankind, no Cactus Jack. Jack says he's done it all in his career and he lists off some accomplishments of his, but there's something missing: he's never been in the main event of Wrestlemania.

If he can't beat HHH in the Cell, he never wants to wrestle again anyway. Shawn Michaels would use nearly those exact words 10 years later against Undertaker at Mania 26. Jack throws in the stipulation that if he wins, HHH gets no rematch and gets to be in the world title match of Wrestlemania no matter what. HHH says you're on and starts walking to the ring. He says Cactus has 20 days left and then it's over.

HHH takes what he wants when he wants it and right now he wants a piece of Cactus Jack. Speaking to the Radicalz, he says they can either get out of the ring or show their appreciation to the man who gave them their contracts. The Radicalz jump Foley, the man that brought them to the company. The heat from the crowd is off the charts here. It's a 6-1 beatdown and the Pedigree leaves Jack laying.

Now let's talk for a minute about why this segment was awesome. First of all, I want to discuss HHH. He gets a lot of well deserved flack for how dreadful he made 2002 and 2003, but in 2000, the man was untouchable when it came to being evil. He and Rock traded the world title for most of the year and there was no one else that deserved it more. HHH was on fire in this promo for multiple reasons.

First of all, he challenged Jack. After being in the fight of his life about two weeks ago, here he is asking for another match with the guy that gave him one of the worst beatings in the history of wrestling. He

gave Jack the option of what match Jack wanted and said he didn't care because he wanted Jack gone that much. HHH was a lot of things in the year 2000, but rarely could he be called a coward.

That brings us to Jack. As usual, Foley was golden on the microphone here and made you believe that all that mattered to him was being in the main event of Wrestlemania. It's something you always hear about and it makes you think of main eventing that show as something that means more than anything to Foley. It gives him a reason to put his career on the line in a match that is perfectly suited to him.

That brings us to the Cell. Today, there's a PPV called Hell in a Cell which has at least one match in the Cell no matter how long the feud has gone. Here, much like at Wrestlemania this year (2012), the match came up because the feud called for it. After the street fight Jack and HHH had at the Rumble, they had to step it up and give us something that would somehow be even more violent and dangerous, which is what the Cell could be. Given the stakes in the Cell match, it makes the match feel like it's something huge and like something we as fans would want to pay money to see.

That brings us to the big surprise to end the angle: after HHH agreed to the match, we got a major turn in the Radicalz joining with HHH who basically bought them with contracts. That stacks the deck against Jack and makes you wonder how could he possibly pull this off. The only way to find that out is on PPV. At the end of the day, this was a huge moment and a great promo which made me want to watch these two fight again and makes me want to see how Jack can get out of this. Great stuff.

The Radicalz and HHH are in the back and HHH announces a ten man tag: himself, X-Pac and the Radicalz vs. Foley/whomever he can find.

Tag Titles: New Age Outlaws vs. Edge/Christian

Edge and Christian are challenging. As soon as the bell rings the Dudleys

come out to watch. They're in the middle of a feud with the Canadians (no really) and are at the moment the hottest tag team act since the 80s. Billy and Christian start us off and Christian speeds things WAY up, sending Billy into a near fit. Christian dives off the top onto both Outlaws on the floor but we missed part of it due to looking at Bubba looking at JR.

Billy avoids another Christian dive and it's off to Road Dogg, but Christian gets in a shot of his own to bring Edge back in. A spinwheel kick gets two on Roadie and Edge is sent to the floor. Billy sends him into the steps and the most famous and successful guy out of all these four is in trouble. D-Von is going off on whatever comes to his mind on commentary, showing more emotion than I've heard from him in about ten years combined. Billy hits a Jackhammer for two.

Bubba wants to put JR through a table and Jerry actually claps. Edge hits a double neckbreaker on the Outlaws and the place erupts. Dallas has always had good crowds. There's the hot tag to Christian and everything breaks down. Billy and Edge are sent to the floor and Christian counters the shaky punches into the reverse DDT for two. Edge spears Billy down for two but Bubba hits a cutter on Christian on the top rope, allowing Roadie to hit the pumphandle slam (his finisher) on Christian to retain the belts.

Rating: B-. It's amazing how hot a good tag match can get a crowd. This was back when the tag division had been the Outlaws and whatever random teams were thrown together to fight for the tag titles. Then all of a sudden you have the Dudleys (who would basically squash the Outlaws for the titles later this month), the Hardys, Edge and Christian, the Outlaws to an extent and Too Cool and they were having some rocking matches. Unfortunately it only lasted a year and a half, but man alive it was a great year and a half.

The Dudleys brawl with the Canadians post match but run away.

Mark Henry asks Mae to stay in the back for the sake of their unborn baby.

Kurt Angle vs. Mark Henry

Angle makes fun of Henry for impregnating Mae, saying it took intensity but lacked intelligence and integrity. Angle as the holier than thou smiley man was glorious. Who would have thought this would have been the main event of a major PPV one day? Angle takes him to the mat but Henry LAUNCHES him into the air to escape. That looked awesome. Henry powerslams him down and drops a big old leg for two. A jackknife gets two but Mark misses a charge and goes over the top and out to the floor. Cue Mae Young who jumps Angle for the DQ.

Angle hits the Angle Slam on Mae who takes it better than half the guys I've seen it used on. Angle would win the European Title later this week on Smackdown.

Rock is here.

Mae is checked out. She doesn't like being on her back so she shows everyone her puppies. The medic is traumatized.

Hollies vs. Acolytes

Hardcore match. The Hollies charge the ring and are immediately knocked to the floor. All four head into the crowd and to the concourse. We hit the concession stand and it's time to drink beer. Bradshaw loads up a powerbomb on a table but here's Viscera with a 2x4. After he slips on beer and gets up, he breaks the weakest 2x4 ever over Bradshaw's back to give Hardcore the pin. This was short but fun.

Here's Jericho with the IC Title and a mic. Jericho says he's glad to be in Dallas but he's worried about having to face the love child of Mr. T.

and Fat Albert.

Intercontinental Title: Chris Jericho vs. Viscera

Jericho pounds away but gets backdropped to stop the momentum dead. A missile dropkick puts Viscera down but walks into a spinwheel kick (yes Viscera at 6'10 and 500lbs could do those) to send him out to the floor. Back in and Jericho tries the springboard dropkick but slips, making it more like a flying leg attack. Viscera takes him to the floor and splashes him against the barricade before heading back inside. Back inside and a Samoan Drop gets two. Jericho hits the bulldog out of nowhere followed by the Lionsault but the Hollies come in for the DQ. Too short to rate but this was exactly what you would expect.

The Acolytes come in as well and it's a brawl to likely set up a six man somewhere soon. Actually scratch that as I can't find a record of that ever occurring. That's surprising.

The Radicalz (not yet named that I don't think) say they're not sorry for what they did earlier.

Kevin Kelly is outside Rock's locker room.

Gangrel gives Luna a weird pep talk.

The XFL is coming. That launched on my birthday.

Women's Title: Luna vs. Jacqueline

Jackie is defending and please make this short. Jackie is from Dallas so guess who the fans like. They start on the floor and the referee gets sandwiched between them. Inside Jackie gets a small package for two but Luna comes back with what we would call an AA. A Vader Bomb misses though and Jackie hits a German suplex for the quick pin to retain.

Gangrel DDTs Jackie post match and I begin to smile.

Kevin Kelly explains No Way Out to Rock until he's finally shut up. Rock asks Kevin if he's ever had pie. Kevin says he had some apple pie earlier but Rock wants to know about poontang pie. Kelly says of course he has but Rock tells him not to lie. Rock says today is Kevin's lucky day and he's got Kevin's first piece of pie. It's actually a shirt that Rock puts over Kevin's head.

Now we get down to business because it's not about who is going to Wrestlemania, because it's about who is Rock facing for the WWF Title at Wrestlemania. Big Show isn't going to stand in Rock's way at No Way Out because it is Rock's destiny to go to Wrestlemania. Rock pauses to ask if Kevin is bored by his pie.

As for Cactus Jack, tonight it's not 5-1 but rather 5-2 because Rock has his back. Rock doesn't care if he's fighting Benoit, Malenko, Guerrero, Saturn, Neptune, Pluto or Uranus, because they can turn their contracts sideways and shove them. Rock was feeling it here and it's amazing how much better promos were back then, as the guys had the chance to show off.

Godfather's ho's are ready for his tag match.

Dudley Boys vs. Godfather/D'Lo Brown

The Dudleys charge the ring and we're on fast. Godfather boots D-Von down and they're the starters. Off to Brown who double teams D-Von with the pimp for two. D-Von takes Brown down with a forearm but misses a middle rope legdrop. Back to Godfather who cleans house and hits the Ho Train. The Ho's get on the apron and the referee misses Bubba chop blocking Godfather. Why they needed to distract the referee is beyond me but whatever. It's basically a handicap match here but Brown manages a Sky High and Low Down on D-Von but Bubba makes the save. 3D ends this quick.

Medics are checking on Godfather's knee so Bubba goes and steals one of them to put through a table. Edge and Christian finally come through the crowd to make the save along with the Hardys.

There's a Stone Cold racecar.

Cactus says don't count him out either tonight or in 20 days. He was never supposed to be here because 15 years ago he was told he wasn't good enough to be in this business. He was ready to go one on five but he's not stupid enough to turn down Rock's head. Cactus says he's going to Wrestlemania.

HHH/X-Pac/Chris Benoit/Dean Malenko/Perry Saturn vs. Cactus Jack/The Rock/???/???/???

Before the bell rings, Rikishi and Too Cool come out to even the odds. It's a wild brawl to start and I'm not even going to try to call it. Rock and HHH are fighting on the ramp as Benoit and Cactus head into the crowd (DANG that could have been an awesome feud). Stephanie is on commentary and the fans are blowing the roof off the place. Grandmaster and X-Pac get things going and Sexay misses a middle rope knee drop.

Off to Saturn and Scotty, the latter of whom has a bandage around his head. He loads up the Worm (with five hops instead of four) but Malenko interferes before Scotty can cover. A big old suplex puts Scotty down and Dean comes in legally. Scotty gets in a shot and brings in Rikishi who runs Dean over. Off to Benoit who charges right into a Samoan Drop. He can't suplex Rikishi but Benoit pounds on his back and is all like oh yeah boy you're going and suplexes Rikishi down.

Jack comes in and pounds Benoit down into the corner. This is one of the hottest crowds I've ever seen. Jack goes for HHH and they head to the announce table. Saturn and Pac have to save HHH from death and we head back inside. HHH stomps Jack down in the corner and shoves the referee away. Off to Pac who almost immediately walks into a neckbreaker to take

him down.

Hot tag brings in Rock and it's spinebusters all around. Pac takes a Rock Bottom for two as HHH saves. Saturn kicks Rock down but Rock is having none of this Bronco Buster nonsense. Grandmaster hits the Hip Hop Drop but Pac gets up and kicks the goggles off Sexay's head. HHH comes in again with the flying knee and it's off to Saturn and Benoit for some double teaming.

Benoit suplexes Sexay down for two and it's back to HHH. The heels are tagging incredibly fast. Grandmaster hits a double DDT out of nowhere on Benoit and HHH. There's the hot tag to Cactus but the referee didn't see it. Everything breaks down and HHH hits the Pedigree on Grandmaster followed by the Swan Dive from Benoit for the pin.

Rating: B. This seems like a match where the crowd reaction carried it to a higher level which is fine. It's certainly better than I remember but it's not as good as I've seen some people make it out to be. Anyway, you could see the great matches coming and this would give Too Cool a nice push, resulting in their only tag title run a few months after this.

The fight keeps going post match and the Outlaws run out with clubs or pipes or something like that. The lights go out and KANE is back (complete with Paul Bearer), hunting for X-Pac. He's even rocking the inverted colors with the black and red trim. Kane runs through DX and the Radicalz and sends them running away to end the show.

Overall Rating: A+. This was one of the best Raws I can ever remember. We had good wrestling, we had comedy, we had an excellent promo, we had a big main event, and we had a return. What more can I possibly ask for? Oh yeah: Jackie getting beaten up. Screw it this is getting a perfect score. The WWF was absolutely amazing in 2000 and this is a great example of why. If today's Raw was even 40% this awesome, it would be the best wrestling show on TV bar none.

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