

Monday Night Raw – August 19, 2002: The Final Rock vs. HHH Match

Monday Night Raw

Date: August 19, 2002

Location: Norfolk Scope Arena, Norfolk, Virginia

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

Another 2002 show of course because that's all I get requests for due to reasons I don't understand. It's also the go home show to Summerslam 2002, which is pretty easily the best Summerslam ever. The main event tonight is Rock vs. HHH. I think I just got why this show was requested. Anyway, let's get to it.

Here's Taker to open the show. He's AMERICAN and not evil at the moment. He lost to Test, an Un-American, last week in a tag match but has him one on one this Sunday. Taker says he isn't one to talk about his political beliefs, but just like his country, he doesn't take any crap from anyone. Only in American can a man like him be him. As long as he can back it up with his fists, that's all he needs.

However these freedoms come with a price. A lot of men and women have fought and died to give him those freedoms, and because of that he respects those fallen men and women. He also has a problem with people that come in here and abuse those freedoms. You can feel Vince's right wing talk flowing through Taker right now. Above all others, he doesn't like Test, he'll beat him up, you can figure out the details of this speech yourselves.

Taker gets done talking and his music plays again, but here's Test on a motorcycle of his own with the upside down American flag flying on the back of it. Test gets in the ring and takes the mic from Taker. He says Taker sucks too, just like America. Why would you EVER give Test a mic? Seriously. Anyway, the fight is on, the other Un-Americans (Storm and Christian) makes the save, Booker and Goldust make the other save, six

man later I'm sure. Yep Booker explains it in case you can't think for yourself.

Hardcore Title: Battle Royal

Tommy Dreamer, Jeff Hardy, Bradshaw, Bubba Ray Dudley, Crash Holly, Johnny Stamboli, Steven Richards, Terri, Spike Dudley

Eric Bischoff comes out and says that the 24/7 rule is gone and at the moment Tommy Dreamer is champion coming in. There's going to be a six minute time limit and whoever is champion at the end gets to keep the title. There are weapons under the ring and a tarp covering something big. A shoulder on Dreamer gives Bradshaw the title so everyone jumps the future JBL.

We're under five minutes left now and Bradshaw finds a cookie sheet to clean house with. Various weapons are brought in and it's your usual hardcore style brawl. Bradshaw loads up a powerbomb on the floor but Stevie superkicks him so Crash can pin him for the title. There's a table in the ring now and we're under 3:30 to go. Jeff uses Bubba as a launching pad to dive over the top and onto Stamboli.

Crash tells Bubba to get the table but gets powerbombed through one by Bubba instead for no cover. Dreamer KO's Bubba with a kendo stick and pins Crash for the title. The Clothesline from Bradshaw gets two on Dreamer as Bubba saves. Bubba hits Bradshaw low and superplexes Dreamer for two. We've got less than a minute left and Bradshaw keeps breaking up pins. Nothing else happens and the clock runs out with Dreamer as champion.

Rating: D. Well that was boring. Nothing interesting happened here and the match just ended with the same stuff going on for the last two minutes. Terri was gone after about a second so she didn't need to be in there at all. Thankfully the title would be unified with the IC Title a week later and the thing was put out of its misery. The joke had gotten old like a year and a half ago so ending it was the right idea.

Post match Kane's music hits and Kane doesn't come out. The screen says My Path Is Chosen.

Stacy and Trish argue over who deserves a women's title match. Eric pops up behind them while they accuse each other of being rather horrible women. Eric says the truest statement I've heard in a long time: "No one cares about women's wrestling, so let's just have a bra and panties match in the mud." Amen brother man.

Stacy Keibler vs. Trish Stratus

Bra and panties in the mud, which is what the big tarp was covering earlier. By bra and panties here they mean they're in underwear to start and fighting in the mud. Stacy throws Trish off the stage and into the mud to start and you really can't tell who is who here. The referee is in there too and one girl (I think Trish) spansks the other. Trish eventually rolls up Stacy for the pin outside the mud pit. The Fink is brought into the mud post match.

Rock is just getting here and is given a package apparently from Paul Heyman. He doesn't want it but stops to that FINALLY he's come back to Norfolk. Rock makes some Heyman jokes and introduces himself to the production lady that gave him the package. His leg starts to twitch because it's got a mind of its own. The package has pictures of Hogan all bloodied by Lesnar in it. Rock vs. Lesnar is Sunday.

Post break we actually recap the mud stuff.

Here's HHH with a contract of some sort. He says that nine times out of ten, everything is business in this ring. This one however is personal. How many times has HHH had a feud that wasn't personal? Without these papers being signed by Shawn, there won't be a match at Summerslam. It's the standard "you can't sue me after I beat you up" agreement.

HHH moves on to Brock Lesnar but stops for a not that nice chant from the fans. Lesnar is watching tonight when it's Rock vs. HHH No DQ and non-title. HHH is going to be waiting for Brock after the big beating. This is taking WAY longer than it should for what's being said but that's par for the course for HHH.

Here's Jericho with an interruption but this is a heel period for him so it's kind of odd for him to interrupt. Jericho: "Getting interrupted

doesn't feel very good does it?" HHH: "It probably feels better than getting beaten at Wrestlemania for the Undisputed Title." Point to HHH. Jericho talks a bit more and the point is that Fozzy is performing tonight. Jericho runs down Flair before their match on Sunday, Flair jumps him with a trashcan and that's finally it.

Booker T/Goldust/Undertaker vs. Un-Americans

It's a big brawl on the floor to start until it's Christian vs. Taker to get things going. Storm and Christian are tag champions here. A tilt-a-whirl slam gets two for Taker and it's off to Booker. Test sends Booker into the steps and it's off to Christian again. Booker gets beaten down for awhile until he gets a boot up in the corner to stop a charging Test. Test powerslams him down for two and throws on a chinlock.

Booker fights up and hits a side kick out of nowhere to put both guys down. Double tags bring in Christian vs. Goldie and Goldust bulldogs and powerslams various opponents. He hits ten punches on Christian in the corner and loads up Shattered Dreams which hit after about 45 seconds of waiting for the referee to not be looking. Taker boots Test down and they fight up the ramp as Booker hits an ax kick on Storm. Christian knocks out Goldust with a title belt for the pin.

Rating: D. Nothing to see here and it doesn't make me want to see either of these matches on Sunday. The whole AMERICA vs. WE HATE AMERICA is an idea that works fine but there needs to be more than that one idea. Other than that though there wasn't enough here to make me care about either match, but there's enough on Summerslam that these aren't really needed.

We get a long video about Rock training for his match against Lesnar, which means training for The Rundown.

Bischoff gives Van Dam a pep talk for his match on Sunday. Big Show comes up and wonders why Van Dam is getting the IC Title shot on Sunday. Rob: "Because you're a tool?" Show: "I'm a giant." Rob: "Ok, you're a giant tool." A match is made for later.

Flair is fired up to fight Jericho on Sunday. Here's Jericho to jump him with a trashcan to even things up from earlier tonight. Flair bleeds on

general principle.

Rob Van Dam vs. Big Show

Van Dam fires off kicks to start but for some reason he tries to monkey flip Show, resulting in RVD being sent to the floor. Show gets sent into the steps so he throws Rob into the barricade. Back in and Van Dam breaks up the chokeslam before firing away shoulders in the corner. The second attempt at the chokeslam hits but Show picks up the steps instead of covering him. Before Show can kill Van Dam though, here's Bischoff to ask what Show is doing. He calls out for Three Minutes and the team that would become known as Three Minuet Warning come out to destroy Show for the DQ. Short and nothing of note.

Rock isn't worried about the match with HHH being No DQ. He talks about how far back they go, including talking about how they argued and fought when they were babies. They also fought when they were in colonial days and in cavemen days. This segues into a Brock Lesnar highlight video and rumors of Lesnar being here tonight are running wild apparently. Rock isn't scared of Lesnar and isn't worried about HHH either. This wasn't one of Rock's best segments but he's got six days left before a long vacation so it's excusable.

HHH goes in to see Bischoff. Shawn has signed the documents but Bischoff throws in that he won't sanction the match. Eric says as far as WWE is concerned, the match never happens. Except for it happening on a WWE PPV in a WWE ring using WWE copyrighted theme songs and being officiated by a WWE referee, nope there's no connection to it.

Time for Fozzy to perform. This goes on for awhile until Jericho says they'll do another song. Flair interrupts and breaks stuff.

We get a long music video about Summerslam and the big matches there.

Rock gets a phone call but doesn't answer it. Ok then.

Lesnar and Heyman have tickets to Raw. Apparently it was Heyman that called him. Bischoff comes out and tells them that they can't interfere.

The Rock vs. HHH

Non-title of course and No DQ. HHH says just bring it and the fight is on. A big clothesline takes the Game down and HHH gets thrown to the floor. Another big clothesline on the floor takes HHH down again but HHH drops Rock on the barricade to slow him down. Back in and HHH stays on the now injured ribs as things slow down. A right hand to the ribs puts Rock down and there's an abdominal stretch.

Rock escapes and they clothesline each other down as more time is spent laying around. Jerry points out the flaw in the Lesnar can't come in idea: if there's No DQ, it's legal for him to come in. Then again you can't expect WWE to cover its own plot holes. Anyway the spinebuster sets up the People's Elbow for two but HHH hits Rock low to slow him back down. Back to the floor and HHH sends Rock into the steps before pulling out the sledgehammer. Shawn runs in for the save and Lesnar is knocked off the apron. The match is thrown out and the big double brawl ends the show.

Rating: C. Not a great match but at the end of the day it's The Rock vs. HHH and therefore it's automatically worth looking at. Rock would be gone soon after this which is probably good for him as there was nothing left for him to do in the WWE for a long time. Shawn would of course go on to have another eight years or so which blew everyone's mind. The match was nothing great but it did its job well enough.

Overall Rating: D. This didn't really do it for me at all. The interesting thing is that Summerslam wound up being one of the best shows ever while the build up show to it sucked. Summerslam was a bright spot in a long stretch of darkness for the WWE and you could see a lot of that darkness here. There's nothing that comes off as interesting here and things would get even worse soon after this with the next year or so being ALL about HHH and Evolution. This was another bad show though.

Here's Summerslam if you're interested:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/08/05/history-of-summerslam-count-up-summerslam-2002-best-summerslam-ever/>

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