

Monday Night Raw – January 13, 2003: Why Would I Want To See That?

Monday Night Raw

Date: January 13, 2003

Location: Mohegan Sun Casino, Uncasville, Connecticut

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

It's the go home show for the Rumble and things aren't looking up at all. We've got Steiner vs. HHH for the title on Sunday, along with a bunch of Raw guys in the Rumble who shouldn't even bother showing up. As for tonight, expect more from HHH and Steiner without them actually having physical contact because it might keep people from wanting to buy the show. Let's get to it.

I've already done the following week's Raw and the review is available at the end if you're interested.

We open with Morely and Bischoff worrying about Vince being here. Some referees come up and complain about being mistreated. The word strike is being mentioned. Oh this story. I was hoping to forget it but it rears its head again. Morely leaves with them to smooth things over when Steiner comes up, saying he wants to fight HHH tonight. Instead, Bischoff makes it a bench press contest. Steiner yells, sounding exactly like his brother. Bischoff wants a controversy free show. Uh...doesn't that make the show boring?

Women's Title: Trish Stratus vs. Victoria vs. Jacqueline

Victoria is defending and this is hardcore for no apparent reason. I always forget how great Victoria looked back in this era. She has Steven Richards with him here still which I'm sure will play into the ending.

There are trashcans full of weapons in each corner. Victoria finds a cardboard standup of Trish which she tears up to get heat. Trish is quickly taken down and Jackie botches a headscissors on the champ.

Trish beats up Victoria and Steven with a kendo stick but gets slammed onto a trashcan lid. The champ misses a moonsault and Jackie gets the most silent near falls you will ever hear. Steven trips both challengers and misses a trashcan lid shot to Trish but it's close enough for Victoria to retain the title. This was one of the worst matches I can remember in YEARS with Jackie's parts being eerily silent. It's too short to rate but this would set some kind of record for worst rating in years.

Richards DDTs Trish post match and but Hurricane of all people makes the save.

The Dudleys come up to yell at Morely and Bischoff because of everything he's put them through lately. Morely tries to play tough guy and gets beaten up, so Bischoff fires the Dudleys. Eric fires them so they threaten to go to Smackdown, which gets them rehired but suspended without pay. They would get the tag titles back on Sunday anyway, making this entire segment entirely pointless.

Maven/Test vs. D'Lo Brown/Christopher Nowitski

Test gets double teamed to start until Chris gets to pound on him a bit. Again Test gets double teamed but has a bit better success this time and brings in Maven who winds up getting caught in a spinebuster by Nowitski. Brown gets two off a flapjack and it's back to Nowitski. Maven gets beaten down even more as this is going NOWHERE. Cold tag brings in Test and house is cleaned but Chris saves Brown from a pumphandle powerslam. The big boot misses Brown and sends Test to the floor before Maven walks into the Sky High. He isn't legal though so Test comes in and kicks Brown's head off for the pin.

Rating: F+. Stacy looked great in the dress and that's the extent of

anything positive about this match. Other than that, there was NOTHING going on here at all with four guys that no one cared about having a boring match. That basically sums up Raw in a single sentence: a bunch of boring matches that no one cares about.

Eric greets a limo but it has Mean Gene inside. He's here to plug the Tenth Anniversary of Raw tomorrow night (that's coming), and for no apparent reason this aired during a commercial. Gene takes a jab at Nitro and that's it. Jericho comes up and wants to be #1 in the Rumble but gets shot down for no apparent reason. Yeah expect to hear the words "for no apparent reason" a lot in 2003.

Regal rips on Jerry Lawler's book.

Jerry Lawler vs. William Regal

Before the match, Regal reads a passage from Jerry's book. The bell rings and Regal has to be checked for a weapon. For some reason that takes three referees. They find brass knuckles and check Storm as well, finding ANOTHER pair of knuckles. Storm gets ejected and Lawler pulls a chain out of his boot. He knocks Regal out cold and gets caught for a DQ. The punch was the only contact of the "match." I've got FIFTY MORE WEEKS of this show.

Royal Rumble Qualifying Match: Raven vs. Jeff Hardy

Raven has trunks and a BIG haircut now. Bird Boy gets a fast two as does Jeff in a feeling out process. I can barely recognize Raven like this. Jeff charges at Raven and they fall to the floor. Back in and Raven takes over by going after the leg which is a new thing for him. Jeff fights him off but misses a fast moonsault which gets two for Raven. Off to a spinning toe hold on Hardy but Jeff comes back with a mule kick. The jawbreaker slows Raven down and there's a spinwheel kick. They botch....something, resulting in Jeff getting sent into the buckle in a slingshot. Hardy blocks the DDT and hits Raven's legs with the Swanton

for the pin.

Rating: D. Raven would be gone in a week which is a shame because Hardy looked horrible here. He was missing almost whatever he tried while Raven was trying to throw in some psychology to keep things coherent. Terrible match and Jeff would be gone in about three months due to burnout. Well that and not showing up to a lot of shows.

Vince arrives and talks to Orton for a few seconds. The shoulder is at 94%.

Sean O'Haire talks about cheating on your wife in the Devil's Advocate gimmick. Sweet goodness that thing had potential, but what the people were wanting was Roddy Piper vs. Rikishi right?

Here's Vince with an announcement but the Dudleys come out sans music. They respect Vince but think Eric is a piece of crap. Vince doesn't like being interrupted...so he lifts their suspension and gives them a title shot at the Rumble. To recap, in an hour they've been fired, rehired, suspended, reinstated and given a title shot. Vince wants to see tables on Sunday.

He tries to make the announcement again but Jericho cuts him off. Jericho sucks up to Vince but Vince proposes that Jericho SHUT UP. Basically Jericho wants to be #1 in the Rumble but Eric won't let him, so Vince says the winner of the over the top challenge tonight gets to pick whatever spot he wants in the Rumble except #1, which goes to Shawn. For some reason, that makes a difference to Jericho but he leaves anyway.

For the third time now Vince tries to make an announcement but Eric interrupts him. Vince yells at him and says that he wants to say something about the tenth anniversary show. Since Eric can't control his roster though, maybe it's time for a public job evaluation. Vince thinks Eric has been doing a good job but that's not why he was hired. Eric was hired to shake up Raw but he hasn't done that. Vince: "I hired you to

grab Raw by the throat and choke it until it spit up a phlegm that got all over everybody.” Eric has thirty days to change Raw, which wound up being Austin returning. If not, Eric is fired.

Post break, Eric begs Vince for more time and says no one can do this job perfectly. Vince says someone can and Shane McMahon pops out of the limo.

Booker T vs. Lance Storm

Booker takes over to start with a slam and a knee drop to the chest but Storm gets in a few shots in the corner to take over. Booker comes back with his spinning sunset flip out of the corner for one, only to have to escape the Sharpshooter attempt. A hook kick to Storm’s face gets two and it’s off to an armbar. Storm whips him into the corner for two and gets the same off a backbreaker. We hit the chinlock to kill some time before Booker makes his comeback with a bunch of chops. The side kick misses and the referee goes down without any contact. Not that it matters as the Dudleys run in for the DQ.

Rating: D+. That’s likely good for match of the night. The Dudleys getting a title shot doesn’t make a ton of sense, especially when Goldust and Booker got screwed out of the titles just a week before this. But then again, it worked three years ago so clearly it can work now too right? The match was another dull one.

Some Smackdown guys are at The World, which is the WWE version of WWF New York.

Steven Richards vs. Hurricane

Set up earlier, meaning Trish and Victoria are with the guys here. Steven’s suplex is countered and Hurricane takes him down with a clothesline. Hurricane hits the Blockbuster (minus most of the flip) and the Eye of the Hurricane for the pin in less than 90 seconds. The girls

are fighting on the floor and Trish gets beaten down.

Post match Trish kicks Victoria down. What was the point of this again?

Nathan Jones is coming. He wouldn't last long.

We run down the Rumble card.

It's time for the Bench Press Challenge. Each guy gets three reps and the best max wins. Steiner comes out and brags about winning everything HHH has thrown at him. He says put 585lbs on to start and we take a break. Post break here's the champion in a suit. Instead of going to the bench press area by the stage, he goes to the ring to talk.

HHH says that he's been planing games with Steiner (DUH) and that Scott is just another guy who is coming to try to knock HHH off the top. Just like Rock, Austin, Hogan, Undertaker and everyone else, he'll lose. Steiner says let's fight and eventually strips HHH down to his underwear. The match was going to suck and everyone knew it.

Kane vs. Batista vs. Chris Jericho vs. Rob Van Dam

This is a four man battle royal and the winner gets to pick their number on Sunday. The power guys pair off as do the other two with Van Dam going shoulder first into the post. Batista and Jericho team up on Kane but Van Dam makes the save. Kane kicks Batista in the face before having a staredown with Van Dam. Instead Kane chokeslams Jericho and goes Hi/Low on Batista with Van Dam.

Rob kicks Jericho's face off but Batista goes off on everyone and spears Kane down. Jericho hits Kane low and Batista clotheslines the tall guy out. Chris tries to put Batista out and gets powerbombed for his efforts. Van Dam kicks Batista out but Batista breaks up the Five Star, allowing Jericho to get the win.

Rating: D. This was a lot of standing around for about six minutes and then thirty seconds of action at the end. Having a match to pick anything other than the 30th spot is pretty stupid as WHY WOULD YOU WANT ANYTHING BUT THIRTY???. Bad match with a stupid premise, which I'm sure you'll hear a lot more of.

Jericho picks #2 like an idiot, only to have Shawn come out and throw Jericho over the top to end the show with a TON of pyro.

Overall Rating: D-. What in the name of all things good and holy have I gotten myself into? This was HORRIBLE, with absolutely no good matches and a stupid major segment that wound up being nothing but a HHH promo and a lame brawl. After the Rumble, things have to get better. Mania 19 was considered a classic so things have to get better leading up to that.....right? Right? Someone please tell me that's right so I don't sob uncontrollably.

Here's the Rumble if you're interested:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/01/22/royal-rumble-count-up-2003-best-match-ever/>

Here's the January 20th Raw if you're interested:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2012/01/21/monday-night-raw-january-20-2003-whoever-requested-this-start-running-now/>

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews