

On This Day: January 23, 1995 – Monday Night Raw: A 1995 Raw That Doesn't Suck

Monday Night Raw

Date: January 23, 1995

Location: Manatee Civic Center, Palmetto, Florida

Attendance: 2,500

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Shawn Michaels

It's the night after the Rumble and the main story is that Bam Bam Bigelow shoves Lawrence Taylor and nearly got in a fight with him. That would be the main event of Wrestlemania, showing how big a mess things were. Shawn Michaels won the Rumble last night as well, setting up his world title shot against Diesel. This is still just an hour and would be for over two more years. Let's get to it.

We open with Vince apologizing for Bigelow shoving Taylor down yesterday. Apparently Bam Bam has been suspended without pay.

Dig that old school Raw opening! I haven't seen that in a long time.

Shawn is brought out to do commentary, which is kind of strange for the Rumble winner. He does his expected bragging.

Tag Titles: Smoking Gunns vs. 1-2-3 Kid/Bob Holly

The Kid and Holly are defending here, having won the belts last night in a tournament final. Vince: "This should be a tremendous matchup!" Shawn: "I'll let you know if it's tremendous. No one knows more about tremendous matches than me." Only Shawn could say that line and get away with it. Billy and Bob start things off and it's a feeling out process between

both faces. Billy with a mullet just doesn't work at all. Then again most stuff Billy did didn't work.

Off to Bart but Bob bails away, interestingly enough from his future partner. The Kid comes in and fires away some kicks but can't hit Bart with any of them. Bart misses a dropkick and it's off to Bob again. We get some token arm work from the champ before both guys miss elbow drops, leading to a standoff. Billy comes in with a bulldog from behind for two as the champions take over. A double gorilla press on Holly looks to set up another double team move but Bob crotches Billy to escape.

The champions hit a double superplex for two as things pick up out of nowhere. We take a break and come back with Billy running into a knee to the ribs to put him back down. A kick to the face puts Billy down again and it's back to the Kid. A spinwheel kick gets two on Billy as does a double dropkick from the champions. Back to Holly who loses a slugout before it's back to the Kid.

In a teachable moment, the Kid hits what we would call the Fameasser on Billy. Apparently the teaching works as Billy hits a Fameasser of his own about thirty seconds later to take the Kid down. Hot tag brings in Bart who gets two off a backdrop of all things. The Gunns hit the Sidewinder (side slam from Bart/legdrop from Billy) for two as Holly makes the save. The Kid gets to play Ricky Morton which is the best possible role for him.

We take another break and come back with Kid in a chinlock. Back to Billy for a legdrop (he REALLY likes that move) for no cover. The Gunns hit a dropkick/suplex combo for two as Shawn is in full criticism mode. Holly finally does something and kicks Bart in the back to let the Kid make the tag. Bob hits that dropkick of his for two but goes up and jumps into a boot like an idiot. The Gunns hit an over the shoulder powerbomb/top rope elbow combination on Holly to take the titles from the Cinderella team.

Rating: B-. This was a LONG match for its day. They probably had about

twenty minutes out there and got a pretty good match out of it. I fail to see the point in taking the Gunns out of the tournament if they were just going to get the belts here. Still though, this was a nice treat given how much time it got. Neither team was heel here but they both had evil flashes in there.

The former champions ask for a rematch which I believe happened next week.

Shawn promises to find a new bodyguard. That would wind up being Sid.

IRS vs. Buck Quartermain

IRS and the Million Dollar Corporation stole Undertaker's urn last night, setting of an eight month or so long feud. You might remember Buck from the old school TNA days. Roddy Piper is on the phone for this for no apparent reason and praises the New Generation. The match is nothing of note and IRS wins with a flying clothesline in about two and a half minutes. The whole match was about Roddy.

Here's the King's Court (Lawler's interview show) with Jeff Jarrett and the Roadie. Jarrett brags about winning the IC Title last night and wants a shot at Diesel. Vince FREAKS about Jarrett wanting a shot at the world title. Well to be fair, why would a midcard champion ever get near the world title? Right Vince?

British Bulldog vs. Black Phantom

The Phantom is portrayed by David Heath, more famous as Gangrel. Davey talks trash to Shawn before the match and gets jumped by the Phantom. A jumping DDT gets two on Smith but he comes back with the delayed vertical suplex for no cover. Vince goes into a bizarre rant about how Shawn didn't deserve to win the Rumble because only one foot hit. What Shawn did was perfectly legal, so why doesn't he deserve the win? Smith hooks a

chinlock for a bit before Phantom makes a comeback and misses a middle rope splash. The powerslam gets the easy pin for Smith.

Rating: D. Nothing to see here but the commentary exchange was pretty fun stuff. Smith was a solid upper midcard guy around this time but would get stuck in a tag team with Luger soon after this that would bring him right back down. Nothing of note to the match here but that's par for the course in squashes.

Bam Bam Bigelow is supposed to apologize but there's no audio. Post break and Bigelow still can't hear us. Oh wait yes we can. It's almost like this company has no idea what it's doing. Wait we DON'T have Bigelow. Egads man this is pathetic.

A quick preview of next week's show ends the show.

Overall Rating: C+. For a 1995 Raw, this was pretty entertaining stuff. A twenty minute match that wasn't half bad is an incredibly rare thing today so back then it would have been a once a year thing. Other than that we didn't have much, but for a one hour show that's pretty good stuff. 1995 just wasn't interesting for the most part though, and that's what this falls under the category of: decent but not interesting.

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