

Monday Night Raw – January 14, 2002: Let The Uninspiring Television Begin

Monday Night Raw

Date: January 14, 2002

Location: American Airlines Center, Dallas, Texas

Commentators: Jerry Lawler, Jim Ross

We're six days away from the Rumble and the main story is of course HHH returning last week. The Rumble is already looking stacked with names like Austin, HHH, Angle and Undertaker already signed up for the match. Other than that...there's not much else to talk about. That's perfectly normal for this time of year in the WWF though so I can't complain about it. Well alright so I will but you know the drill by now I'm sure. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Austin vs. Angle from Smackdown which ended with Kane interfering for no apparent reason and chokeslamming both guys. A few other guys came out and the mini Rumble before the Rumble went down with HHH standing tall.

Here's Flair to open the show. He praises Dallas and talks about facing Kerry Von Erich in Texas Stadium back in 1984. Lately though, Vince has humbled Flair and we get a clip of the beating from last week. We also get a clip from Smackdown where Vince says that destroying lives turns him on. Flair yells at the cameraman for following him around and makes the match on Sunday a street fight. There are some elbows on the microphone for good sake but he wants to fight Vince now. Flair wants to fight Vince, but here's Jericho instead.

Jericho talks about how the show used to revolve around Flair, but now this is his show. He says he'll beat Rock for the fifth time and thinks

Flair can't do it anymore. Jericho brags about how awesome he is and says he's the anti-Texan. Now Jericho goes onto a rant about how Flair and President George W. Bush are a lot alike but doesn't say why. Jericho says Flair is going to choke on Sunday and the fight is on.

Flair hits a few low blows and puts the Undisputed Champion in the Figure Four, but Vince runs out with the lead pipe for the save. They didn't even try to protect Jericho at this point. Vince slaps him in the head a bit because Flair has a concussion but a kick between Flair's legs is blocked. Jericho decks Flair and this segment FINALLY ends after about twenty minutes. All that to announce that it's a street fight, and yet people still wonder why they can't get people on the show at times.

Lance Storm and Christian praise Jericho. Bradshaw comes in to yell at them, saying George Bush has given Jericho his freedom. Without making this a political argument, 1. Jericho is Canadian, 2. What freedom did Bush give him? 3. Why is Bradshaw talking to the world champion? Apparently a match is made.

Bubba Ray Dudley vs. Spike Dudley

The evil Bubba pounds Spike into the corner to start and works over the ribs, only to miss a Vader Bomb in the corner. D-Von trips Spike up but the bigger Dudleys collide. The Dudley Dog is countered and the Dudleys load up What's Up with Stacy providing the distraction. Tazz breaks that up and it's a victory roll for the pin for Spike. Nothing here but they built the title match on Sunday.

Stephanie arrives and is already complaining. HHH is with her and doesn't seem to care at all.

Tajiri/Hurricane vs. Billy and Chuck

This was set up on Heat and Billy was so upset that he and Chuck had to

cancel their date with two WAY hot chicks. Hurricane doesn't buy it either and we get a WHATSUPWITHDAT. He says Billy and Chuck are more like the Human Torch: flame on. Billy and Hurricane start and Chuck almost immediately cheats. Chuck comes in legally now and stomps away in the corner as the beating continues. A clothesline puts Chuck down and there's the not hot tag to Tajiri. Kicks are fired, we get heel miscommunication, Billy distracts Tajiri and the superkick from Chuck gets the pin. Another nothing match.

Undertaker arrives.

Scotty and Albert are at WWF New York.

Angle says he'll break Kane's ankle tonight. We get Shakira lyrics and Olympic references in there too.

Debra and Stephanie argue over whose husband is better. They're about to fight but since that could send wrestling back a few hundred years, referees break it up. Is there ANYTHING of note in the first half of this show?

Jazz vs. Jacqueline

That's a big negative on the previous question. The winner gets a title shot at Trish on Sunday. Jackie is the hometown girl so I think you can tell where this is going. Jazz dominates to start but misses a splash. That means absolutely nothing as Jackie gets caught in a fisherman's buster for the pin and the shot. This was barely a minute.

Kurt Angle vs. Kane

Kane no sells some right hands to start and is punched out to the floor. More punching occurs on the floor but Angle hits a fast dropkick as we head back in. Kane sends him into the corner and fires off some shoulders

as there's a ton of smoke in the arena from Kane's entrance. The elbow drop misses Kurt so Angle pounds away. A one armed side slam puts Angle down as the match continues to drag.

Kane loads up the top rope clothesline but Angle runs the corner for the suplex. We needed that as hopefully the match can pick up a bit now. A quick ankle lock attempt is broken up and the enziguri puts Angle down. Kane throws Angle into the corner and pounds away before going up top, where he blocks another suplex attempt. The top rope clothesline gets two but the chokeslam is countered into the ankle lock.

This goes on for a LONG time before Kane gets to the rope. An Angle Slam gets two and Kane sits up before grabbing Angle for the chokeslam. Angle grabs the referee, so Kane chokeslams both of them. Kane puts Angle in the ankle lock and Kurt taps, but there's no referee. Back to the ankle lock but Angle backs up and rolls Kane up for the pin with a handful of ropes.

Rating: C-. This was just ok and the lack of selling of the ankle was really annoying. These two would face off at Wrestlemania again in a match that wasn't all that good. Other than that, Angle looked good running up the corner for the suplex, but other than that there wasn't much at all. At least it was long enough to rate.

Stephanie manipulates HHH to go after Austin.

Big Show comes in to see the APA when Booker comes in as well. Booker vomited on Smackdown so here are some jokes about that for good measure. Apparently we're getting a six man with the APA/someone vs. the Canadians. Also it's Booker vs. Big Show. Riveting stuff people.

Edge/Rob Van Dam vs. William Regal/Test

It's a brawl to start as Test tries to sneak in through the crowd. Van

Dam and Test start things off with the Canadian taking over. Off to Regal for some forearms and stomps to keep control. Back to Test to choke in the corner for a bit as the uninspired stuff continues tonight. We hit the chinlock on RVD for a bit before he fights up and hits the spin kick to take Test down. Off to Edge vs. Regal with the Hall of Famer cleaning house. Regal loads up the brass knuckles and lays out Van Dam. After a melee he lays out Edge as well for the upset pin.

Rating: D. That word uninspired continues to fit perfectly here. The problem above all else here is that there's no reason for me to care about this match. Basically we needed two guys to throw in there for the sake of preventing Edge vs. Regal from happening from before Sunday. Just another dull match here.

The APA gets Rikishi to be their partner.

Big Show vs. Booker T

Booker jumps him to start but gets caught in a powerslam. There's a HARD chop in the corner by the big man but Booker low bridges him out to the floor. Show blocks a shot into the post and whips Booker into it instead as we head back inside. Booker takes out the knee and hits the ax kick for two. Show comes back with some basic stuff but Booker gets a middle buckle off somewhere in there and Show misses a charge into it, giving Booker the cheap pin. Again, NOTHING of note here and very short.

Time for Austin to eat up a LOT of time as he says he and HHH disagree. He goes into a story (complete with acting out each bit) about going to a bar last night and drinking beer, playing pool and darts, riding a mechanical bull (complete with all the ways he rode it), started a bar fight, answered a bartender's question and trained for the Royal Rumble by throwing everyone out of the bar. That's not all he did, but I need to split up this paragraph.

Austin talked about how great HHH looks, listed off all of the exercises

HHH has been doing to get back into shape, explained his strategy of getting a bigger beer belly because it makes it harder to throw him over (that's hilarious!), lists off everything he ate at What-A-Burger (real place) and talks about all the parts of HHH's head he can talk trash to, including both sides and the back. This was LONG but hilarious, including talking about the training methods.

We recap Vince and Flair from earlier.

Chris Jericho/Lance Storm/Christian vs. APA/Rikishi

Jericho and Rikishi start things off but the Samoan has to fight off Storm as well. The double teaming allows for Lance to take over with a superkick before it's back to Chris. There's a belly to belly suplex for two and it's off to Bradshaw. Christian and Jericho stomp away at Bradshaw in the corner but Christian charges into a boot in the corner. The not hot tag brings in Faarooq as everything breaks down. A missile dropkick puts Bradshaw down and Faarooq hits the spinebuster on Jericho, but a distraction lets Jericho pop up for the Breakdown (Skull Crushing Finale) on Faarooq for the pin.

Rating: D. ANOTHER match barely long enough to rate here. Here's the biggest problem with this match: why in the world is Rikishi in this match instead of Jericho's opponent on Sunday, as in the Rock? That would make sense here, but that's not going to happen on this show as we've seen so far. Another lame match here.

HHH tells Stephanie he's going to the ring alone.

Here's the Game to close out the show. He talks about what a thrill it was to return last week, but it's not complete until he wins the Rumble on Sunday. As usual, it takes nearly five minutes to get to that point. HHH says he'll fight anyone and here's Austin. The Game blocks Austin from going to the buckle and the fight is on. Austin blocks a Pedigree but Taker comes in to blast them both with a chair and stand tall to end

the show.

Overall Rating: D. Well let's see: other than in ads for the show, I have no idea who Jericho is defending against on Sunday, I don't want to see the Rumble, and they couldn't make it any clearer that HHH is winning the Rumble if they put up a big sign about it. This year is not off to a good start and it's going to get even worse in the coming months. Nothing good to see here.

Here's the Royal Rumble if you're interested:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2013/01/16/royal-rumble-count-up-2013-redo-2002-hes-back-and-theres-not-a-thing-we-can-do-about-it/>

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