

Monday Night Raw – January 28, 2002: The History of the WWF

Monday Night Raw

Date: January 28, 2002

Location: Richmond Coliseum, Richmond, Virginia

Attendance: 9,034

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

We're inching closer to No Way Out and I don't think we have any matches announced for it yet. Granted it's not like it matters as that's just a stop before we get to HHH's moment at Wrestlemania which I'm sure everyone is thrilled about. The main event tonight is Austin vs. Angle which sounds like a #1 contenders match to me. Oh and in case you were wondering what Vince's announcement was, keep reading. Let's get to it.

Kane vs. Big Show

We immediately open with a match and Big Show runs him over quickly. A clothesline puts Kane down again and an elbow drop gets two. Kane fights up and wins a brief slugout, only to get kicked in the face. That's fine by Kane as he pops up and slams Show, only to go up and jump into the chokeslam for two. Show is STUNNED so he tries another chokeslam but Kane hits his version first for the fast pin. Not horrible actually.

Flair is in the office when the APA comes in. They yell about the people Vince is bringing in (I'm saving the reveal for later) and say these people are poison. Bradshaw wants a fight right now but the guys haven't debuted yet.

Goldust quotes the Usual Suspects and talks about presumably Rock some more.

We get another clip from the Rumble of Maven eliminating Undertaker and the beating that followed. Since Maven was never eliminated from the Rumble, Maven gets a world title match tonight.

Jericho says he granted Maven the title match tonight because he's a fighting champion. However, why are the people talking about Maven when Jericho got the biggest win of his career at the same Rumble? Tonight Jericho is going to watch Angle and Austin beat each other up and then at No Way Out, he'll pick up the pieces.

Intercontinental Title: Rob Van Dam vs. William Regal

Regal is defending. Van Dam jumps Regal during the brass knuckles search and the fans go NUTS. Rob rams him into the steps before we head inside for the first time. There's the stepover kick for two on Regal followed by the standing moonsault for the same. Not that it matters are Regal kicks Rob low for the LAME DQ.

Regal shoves the referee down and leaves with his belt. Rob goes after him though and pounds away but cue the Dudleys to beat down Van Dam. Edge makes the save for no apparent reason. I smell a tag match here. Regal comes back in and lays out Edge with the knuckles.

Stephanie comes in to yell at Flair for making HHH vs. Booker later tonight. Apparently it was Papa McMahon that made the match, not Flair. Ok then.

Lance Storm/Christian vs. Godfather/Diamond Dallas Page

Apparently Page is a client of Godfather's escort service. Godfather and Storm start things off and a big back elbow puts Lance down. Christian pulls the rope down to stop Godfather and send him to the floor. Back inside a Storm dropkick gets two and Christian comes in to stomp away for a bit. A double Canadian suplex gets two and it's back to Storm for a

legdrop for two. Christian gets another two count but starts having a fit. Not hot tag brings in DDP who cleans part of the house. Christian goes up but gets crotched, allowing Godfather to hit the running splash, followed by a Diamond Cutter to Storm for the pin.

Rating: D. This came and went and was nothing of note. Godfather didn't fit at all in the new WWF and it was very clear in a hurry. Page didn't work in WWE either as there was no connection with the fans. Page grew up in WCW before the fans' eyes, but here he's a guy who used to be a big deal in WCW and that's it. That isn't going to work and never has before.

Vince is here and is almost in a trance. The limo was late to the show so the driver apologizes, but Vince just taps him on the arm and walks away. That's not normal McMahon behavior to put it mildly.

Here's Flair as we're somehow in Flair Country again this week. He talks about beating Vince at the Rumble a few weeks ago, which led to Vince having a meltdown on Smackdown. The show saw Vince sitting in a chair for the entire show, talking about how he was going to destroy his own creation. At the end of the night, Vince spun around, revealing the letters N.W.O. on the back of his chair.

That's who people have been worried about all night long and that's who Flair wants to stop from coming. Therefore, Flair is going to appeal to Vince's pride by showing a video he's had made: The History of the WWF. Usually I don't show videos in my reviews, but I can't describe how good this is, as it covers EVERYTHING of note in company history. Check this out.

Flair asks Vince to come out and face him and here's the (half) boss. Ric goes on a rant and a half about how Vince must be out of his mind to think of bringing those guys here. If Vince wants to beat up Flair, go right ahead if that keeps those guys out. If ANYONE in that video means anything to Vince, he shouldn't do it.

Vince grabs the mic and says he wants 100% control of his company and he wants Flair out. If Flair sells Vince his stock back at the price Flair paid for it, no NWO. Vince gives him a few days to think about it, but if Flair says no then the poison of the NWO enters the WWF and destroys the company. Vince says that if his company is going down, everyone is going with him but he will be the last one to survive. AWESOME segment here and I can't believe I'm saying this, but I want to see more of this stuff.

Nidia is at WWF New York and is excited about Maven's title shot.

WWF World Title: Maven vs. Chris Jericho

Maven finally has some trunks. Jericho turns his back on Maven to start but gets jumped for his efforts. A decent dropkick gets two for the rookie and Jericho is STUNNED. They head to the floor where Maven gets his chest lit up by chops. Back inside and Jericho knocks him down before taking off a buckle pad. Maven escapes the Walls and launches Jericho into the exposed buckle for a VERY hot two. There's a small package for the same and the fans are losing their minds here. Not that it matters though as the Walls are put on and Maven wisely taps out.

Rating: C+. Considering Maven debuted less than a year ago with NO seasoning, this was pretty awesome stuff. Those near falls were really close and the fans were totally into it. The one perk of having such a weak champion is that people buy into the idea that anyone can beat him, even someone like Maven. Not horrible by any account.

Post match heeeeeeeere's Taker for the big beatdown. He beats on Maven in the Tree of Woe and does the throat crush with a chair. Jericho is lounging back on commentary during the beating.

Taker threatens to make Coach's teeth into a necklace if he says the name Maven in Taker's presence again. The Dead Man goes on a rant about Maven and says that Maven is going to keep paying the price until it's decided that the bill is paid up. As for Rock, it's none of his business who

eliminated Undertaker. Taker says he doesn't sing and dance, and he won't be disrespected by Rock.

Jazz finds Billy and Chuck "stretching". Apparently groin stretches are next so Jazz leaves.

Stephanie yells about HHH's match but HHH doesn't seem to care who made the match with Booker. Oh and why did HHH take off his wedding ring for a match? HHH: "Because I'm wrestling." Silly question, easy answer.

Trish Stratus/APA vs. Jazz/Billy and Chuck

The girls start and Jazz hits a big clothesline to take over. A dropkick sends Jazz out to the floor but she comes right back with a double chickenwing lift. Off to Chuck who shoves Trish down before it's off to Bradshaw for a whooping. Chuck pounds away in the corner but Bradshaw shrugs it off and brings in Faarooq. A spinebuster puts Chuck down and everything breaks down. Trish tries a rana on Chuck but gets powerbombed down for two. Chuck made sure to not go chest to chest on her in a funny bit.

Rating: D. This went nowhere at all other than a funny comedy spot at the end. The tag division was dead at this point and I honestly can't think of who the champions are here. Oh wait it's a team that's been together for all of six weeks and who won't team together again after losing the titles. Nothing to see here.

Angle tells the fans WHAT: he's going to No Way Out.

Booker T vs. HHH

They fight over a top wristlock to start and HHH takes him down to the mat where he can pound away. Now to mix it up, HHH pounds away in the corner, only to get dropped face first onto the buckle. Booker misses a spin kick

and charges into a spinebuster to put both guys down. The jumping knee to the face staggers Booker and a neckbreaker gets two.

We head to the floor and HHH nails him with a clothesline before sending him back into the ring. Here's Christian of all people to lay out HHH to give Booker a two count. There's a facebuster to put Booker back down as Stephanie runs out to slap Christian in the face. HHH saves his wife but Booker rams them together, allowing him to roll up the Game and use a handful of trunks for the surprise pin.

Rating: D+. It's pretty clear that new HHH isn't nearly as good as the old one was. This was almost all punching and signature stuff before the screwy ending. Apparently Christian and HHH had some kind of interaction on Smackdown which is fine for a reason for the interference here. HHH would take a LONG time to get back into form.

HHH went OFF on Stephanie during the break and threw her out of the locker room.

Kurt Angle vs. Steve Austin

Winner gets the title shot at No Way Out. As is his custom, Austin starts pounding away on the floor before hitting a powerslam for two in the ring. There's the Thesz Press and Angle is in trouble. Scratch that as Angle comes right back with a belly to belly overhead suplex for two. A hard whip sends Austin into the corner but he comes back with that whip spinebuster of his for a delayed two.

Angle comes back by rolling Germans but Austin comes back by sitting him on the top and chopping away. A top rope superplex takes Angle down for two and they head to the floor. Back in and a low blow puts Austin down. Angle slides in a chair but Austin intercepts it, only to hold his cool in a surprising turn of events.

Steve loads up the Stunner but gets shoved into the referee. Angle lays him out with the chair but only gets two when the referee is back up. There's the ankle lock but Austin finally grabs the rope. The Angle Slam gets two as Austin gets his foot on the rope but Kurt of course things he won. The referee tells him what happened but he walks into a Stunner to send Austin to No Way Out.

Rating: B. Austin and Angle were guys that had great chemistry together and they showed it again here. As I've said before, Austin's in ring abilities are often forgotten, which is a shame because he's an excellent performer inside the ring. This worked very well and it made you believe Jericho was in real trouble when we get to the PPV.

Post match Jericho charges in but gets a Stunner of his own.

Overall Rating: B. This is a show where what was weak was quite weak but what was good was OUTSTANDING. The history video is as good as you will ever see and I'd love to see an updated one for the modern era. Either way, this is pretty easily the show of the year so far with some excellent stuff and mostly short bad stuff. That's a great help to the show and it worked quite well.

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