

On This Day: February 22, 1993 – Monday Night Raw: Hulk Hogan's Raw Debut vs...Arnold Schwarzenegger?

Monday Night Raw

Date: February 22, 1993

Location: Manhattan Center, New York City, New York

Attendance: 1,000

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Rob Bartlett, Randy Savage

This is going WAY back into the day, as in the show isn't even two months old yet. This would be the seventh episode of the series and we're coming up on Wrestlemania IX. The main story tonight though is that for the first time ever on Raw, Hulk Hogan will be live in the ring for one of the only times ever in the early days. It's also Hogan's first on screen appearance since around Wrestlemania of the previous year. Let's get to it.

Rob Bartlett, a comedian who was on Raw in the early days (and has since admitted that he had no business there and knew he was terrible) says we're live from New York for Monday Night Raw.

The announcers talk about the upcoming show for a bit and they do the "It's uncut, uncooked and uncensored." Again, why is it called Raw?

Bam Bam Bigelow vs. Scott Taylor

In a few years Taylor would change his last name to 2 Hotty. Bartlett: "Who is Bigelow fighting? Some guy they got off the street?" Taylor gets in a few shots to start but a BIG clothesline takes him right back down. An electric chair puts Bigelow down again as Savage has now started calling Hogan divine. He was a monster earlier and now he's heavenly. A butterfly backbreaker sets up a pair of top rope headbutts to end the squash. Bigelow wins in case you're some kind of schnook.

We get a pre recorded interview with Hogan where he says that the future for Hulkamania is really bright. Before he gets to that though, he talks about the past of Hulkamania where he is indeed a human being that has made mistakes. I think this is an admission of his steroid use but he never says those exact words. Granted he admitted it in the trial but that hadn't happened yet.

Now Hogan talks about "tabloid terrorism" and goes onto a mini rant about how bad it is when someone says something and doesn't back it up. I'm legitimately laughing out loud that HULK HOGAN is complaining about someone making false statements. Hogan issues a fifth demandment: Train, say your prayers, take your vitamins, believe in yourself and now, BELIEVE IN HULK HOGAN!

Nasty Boys/Tatanka vs. Shawn Michaels/Beverly Brothers

Shawn is IC Champion and feuding with Tatanka or about to be feuding with him. Apparently it's the former. For clarity, the Beverlys are Beau and Blake and the Nastys are Jerry Sags and Brian Knobbs. It's a big brawl to start until we get down to Sags vs. we'll say Blake Beverly. It's off to Knobbs and there's a double Beverly Pit Stop (don't ask). Tatanka vs. Shawn is official for Mania. Blake finally gets a boot up in the corner and it's off to Shawn. The champ hits a jumping back elbow to take Knobbs down and the Brothers get in some cheating.

Knobbs escapes long enough to tag in Tatanka so Shawn goes running over to Beau for a tag. Tatanka hooks an armbar on Beau before it's back to Sags for the same move. A shoulder breaker puts Beau down and it's back to Tatanka for more cranking on the arm. Everything breaks down again and Beau keeps getting beaten up. Back to Brian for more beating in the corner and we take a break.

Back with Knobbs stomping away on Beau even more. Blake finally does something by low bridging Brian to give his brother control. Off to Blake legally now as Savage is talking about Boyz 2 Men. Shawn comes in but is only a decoy to allow the Brothers to do the Haas/Benjamin spot of one jumping over the other's back to land on Brian's back as he's draped over the ropes. Off to Blake for a bearhug which goes nowhere so it's off to Beau for some generic stomping.

Thankfully Shawn comes in to stop another tag or the match might have actually gotten interesting. That was a close call. Brian and Michaels clothesline each other and we get a tag off to Tatanka. A bit of house is cleaned and Tatanka gets two off a top rope chop. The Papoose To Go puts Shawn out but everything breaks down. We get down to Shawn vs. Tatanka and Shawn loads up the Teardrop Suplex but Tatanka reverses into a sunset

flip for the upset pin.

Rating: D+. This match just kept going. I'm not sure if the Nastys and Beverlys were feuding at this point but they didn't fight at Wrestlemania. Then again I'm surprised the Beverlys still had jobs at this point so it's not a surprise that they're filling in a spot in a six man tag here. WAY too long of a match here though and it wasn't good enough to validate this amount of time.

Wrestlemania IX is coming to Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas.

Speaking of people who shouldn't have a job at this point, Sean Mooney is with the fans who are excited about Hogan being back.

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Crush vs. Terry Taylor

It's another squash as Crush gets to throw Taylor around for a bit. The interesting note during this match: Vince talks about Bill Clinton appointing Hulk to head up his physical fitness council. That's all well and good, but we get a phone call from "Arnold Schwarzenegger" (Bartlett doing a decent impression), ranting about how he wants that position.

Taylor hooks a chinlock and a jawbreaker before Crush throws him off. A few power moves set up the Headvice on Taylor for the submission.

Rating: D. Seriously, WHAT IS UP WITH THIS BARTLETT GUY??? I get that he's a comedian, but that begs the question: if you want comedy, why is Bobby Heenan not doing this role? He's a funny guy and actually knows what he's talking about in wrestling. Bartlett is certainly trying but he's just not in the right role here.

We recap Money Inc. smashing Beefcake's already hurt face with a metal briefcase. This turned Jimmy Hart face and has brought Hogan back to avenge his friend.

Here's Hogan for the first time on Monday Night Raw. He says he has a lot of stuff to talk about but first of all, it's about Brutus Beefcake and his face injury. Hogan thanks God and Jimmy Hart for helping Brutus through this as apparently that's enough to forgive Jimmy for about ten years of tormenting him. Hulk calls out Brutus, who looks pretty good for having his face crushed just a week or two ago.

Beefcake talks about how he was hurt last week but thankfully his face is now made of titanium so it didn't do much damage. Well it broke his nose but that's an acceptable loss. They bring out Jimmy Hart as their new manager and wouldn't you know it: Jimmy has always wanted to manage Hulk. So is it like when you're seven and you pick on the girls you like? Oh and they're called the Mega Maniacs. Jimmy's first assignment: get them matches with Money Inc., either singles or tag matches. This was another

long segment with some stupid parts to it.

Wrestlemania is still happening at Caesar's Palace. Nothing has changed in the last 20 minutes.

Hogan and Beefcake are still posing after the break.

Undertaker vs. Skinner

After the entrances we take a break with like two minutes left. Skinner clotheslines him to the floor but we have a G.I. Joe commercial to get through. Skinner pounds away on Undertaker and knocks him to the floor where Taker gets choked. Vince tells us that next week Bret is defending the world title against "one of the Headshrinkers." Yeah they don't even have an opponent yet. The show ends with the match still in progress.

Overall Rating: D. I know the shows were bad back in the day, but this was REALLY bad. Hogan and Beefcake teaming up with Hart was the focus of this show but it never clicked at all. Even when I was a kid (five at this point) I didn't buy Jimmy Hart as Hogan's friend. They were enemies and it didn't work that all of a sudden they got along. Other than that the show was dull and didn't have any good matches in sight. We'll get back to 1993 eventually.

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