

On This Day: February 26, 2010 – Smackdown: It's Time To Point At A Sign

Smackdown

Date: February 26, 2010

Location: Bradley Center, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Commentators: Todd Grisham, Matt Striker

This is a little trip back to the past for the sake of the day the show aired. We're just after the Elimination Chamber and on the road to Wrestlemania 26. I barely remember anything about this time period but I believe Batista and Jericho both won world titles on Sunday and Shawn is about to face Undertaker again in his retirement match. We'll find out the rest in a bit so let's get to it.

We open with the introduction of the new World Champion Chris Jericho. Oh that's right he's going to face Edge at Mania. The champ says that he's the new champion and then he says it again. It took him fifteen months but he's finally gotten back to where he belongs. Monday was supposed to be his inauguration as champion but instead Edge interfered and broke it up. Jericho says he didn't deserve that treatment but here's Edge with a rebuttal.

Edge hates to admit it but Jericho did what he set out to do on Sunday. Jericho says he did it because he's the best in the world. Edge lists off some of Jericho's accomplishments and says spear more and more with each one. After listing the final thing he says spear about ten times and is looking Jericho straight in the eyes.

Edge thinks the spears are getting into Jericho's mind because he sees fear in his eyes. Jericho knows he can beat Edge but Edge still sees doubt in the champ's eyes. Edge doesn't want any excuses at Wrestlemania

because if Jericho isn't at his best, it means a spear. Jericho says Edge will never spear him again and there's a shot to the non-champion's head. The Codebreaker is blocked and there's a spear to take Jericho down. Nice opening segment but just shouting SPEAR over and over again never worked for Edge.

The MITB case is above the ring.

Money in the Bank Qualifying Match: John Morrison vs. Dolph Ziggler vs. R-Truth

Of the eight MITB spots, only Christian is in so far. Truth has his NXT Rookie David Otunga here with him. Yeah this was when NXT was an actual competition and pretty awesome actually. Ziggy heads to the floor almost immediately but both other guys head to the floor after him. That goes nowhere so we get Morrison vs. Truth in the ring. Truth does his flipping around sequence and hits the leg lariat for two. The cover draws Ziggler back in but he heads back to the floor again right after.

Morrison hits a dropkick for two as Ziggler makes another save. John chases Dolph around the ring before Dolph heads back in to get beaten up by Truth. Ziggler gets sent to the floor where Truth hits (in the loosest sense of the word) a big dive to take him out. We take a break and come back with Ziggler hooking a chinlock on Truth. Morrison comes back in but is immediately sent to the floor again.

Ziggler hooks a sleeper, his finisher at the time, on Truth and gets the bodyscissors as well. Morrison runs in for the save and gets a Fameasser for his troubles. A reverse slam gets the same on Morrison as Truth is down on the floor. Morrison grabs a quick small package for two but Truth gets in in time for the save. Ziggler gets two on Truth off a dropkick but can't hit the Zig Zag. Instead a belly to belly puts Truth down for two and a small package gets the same for Truth.

Morrison comes back in and pounds away on Dolph, only to get caught by

the spinning forearm from Truth. That gets two from both Truth and Ziggler after the latter throws Truth to the floor. Dolph loads up a superplex but Truth comes back in to break it up, shoving Ziggler out to the floor in the process. A sunset bomb by Morrison takes Truth down but John can't cover. Starship Pain hits but Ziggler breaks up ANOTHER cover by pulling Morrison out to the floor. Dolph slides in and steals the pin and the spot in the ladder match.

Rating: B. Nice fast paced match here with all three guys looking good. Ziggler was starting to rise up the card at this point but he wasn't quite there yet. Morrison was the likely candidate to go on and win something big before the end of the year but it would wind up being his old partner named Miz that won the world title first, which shocked a lot of people. Anyway, very fun triple threat here and I think Truth/Morrison would hook up as a team soon after this.

Career vs. Streak is official for Wrestlemania.

Women's Title: Mickie James vs. Michelle McCool

Mickie is defending and Vickie Guerrero is guest referee for no apparent reason. Apparently Mickie accidentally threw cottage cheese on Vickie. I'm sorry I asked for a reason. Michelle grabs a headlock to start and runs Mickie over with a shoulder block. She dances a bit in celebration but Mickie erupts with a tackle and punches for no count because Vickie is yelling at Layla. Mickie avoids a charging Michelle and sends her to the floor for a baseball slide. A nice rana sends Michelle flying onto the floor as Vickie screeches.

Layla gets kicked in the face but the distraction allows McCool to take over with some hair pulling. Beth Phoenix is watching in the back. James comes back with some forearms but they don't get her very far. Michelle's powerbomb is countered into a rana but she comes back with a belly to belly, only to have Vickie fall out of the ring on an attempt to slide into counting position. Mickie gets a rollup but Vickie slaps her in the

face. A big boot from Michelle is enough for the pin and the title.

Rating: D. I guess they were going for the screwjob here but it didn't work for the most part. Even after hearing the explanation for the feud, I'm still not sure why Vickie and Mickie don't get along. Maybe they don't like rhyming names or something. Anyway, it still amazes me how much better the divas seem here. They seem much more serious and competent than they are in modern times. The fact that this is three years old makes it all the more stunning.

Money in the Bank Qualifying Match: Kane vs. Drew McIntyre

Drew is IC Champion and undefeated here. He was supposed to go and win the world title eventually but hey, domestic violence with a Diva can derail plans. If nothing else we get the full Broken Dreams entrance for Drew which is still awesome. Drew's big boot is caught by Kane and there's an uppercut from the Big Bald. A suplex gets two for Kane but Drew slides to the apron and hits a neckbreaker onto the top rope to take over.

A BIG clothesline gets two for the champion and it's off to a cravate. Kane fights out of it with the side slam for two but the top rope clothesline misses. A modified Zig Zag (even the announcers call it that) gets two for McIntyre but he can't hook the Future Shock DDT. Instead it's a big boot by Kane for two which shocks the announcers way more than it should. The referee gets tripped up for what appears to be inadvertent reasons as Drew can't hook the Future Shock again. Kane kicks him in the head for the surprise pin to end the undefeated streak. Well that's sudden.

Rating: C-. Not much of a match here and the ending was really weird. Instead of a big move or anything it was just a quick boot to the face for a pin. If I remember right this match wouldn't count or something like that which became a running theme for McIntyre matches over the next few weeks. Nothing special here though.

Drew goes on a path of rage post match and yells at Striker for no apparent reason.

Here's Miz, who at the moment is a Unified Tag Champion and the US Champion, meaning he has three belts. Be Jealous I guess. He says that since he's a tag champion he can go to any show he wants, but he still doesn't have a match at Wrestlemania. Miz insults Teddy Long a bit which brings out the bald GM. Since Miz's partner Big Show isn't here, we can't have a tag title match. Instead it's going to be Miz one on one with Edge.

Cheech and Chong are hosting Raw. Good freaking grief.

Money in the Bank Qualifying Match: CM Punk vs. Shelton Benjamin

This is back when Punk actually had hair. Shelton is freshly back on Smackdown and freshly face as well I believe. Feeling out process to start until Shelton gets in some kicks to the chest to send Punk to the floor. Benjamin charges in like an idiot though and gets guillotined down on the top rope. A hard whip into the corner gets two for CM and it's off to a front facelock.

Punk hits a swinging neckbreaker for two and it's off to a figure four necklock. Shelton stands up in an impressive display of power and hits a quick suplex for two. In an impressive display of athleticism, Benjamin jumps to the top rope and springs back for a clothesline for two. Shelton was INSANELY athletic but the Gold Standard thing killed him.

Punk hits a high kick for two but can't hit the bulldog out of the corner. Luke Gallows (currently Doc in Aces and 8's) tries to interfere but Rey Mysterio runs out and takes him down. Paydirt (jumping Downward Spiral) hits Punk out of nowhere for the upset pin to send Shelton to Mania.

Rating: C+. Better match here than I was expecting but Shelton was so bored by this Gold thing and it was obvious. To go from as hot as he was a few years earlier to this is a very telling sign. Punk was perfect in the Straightedge Messiah role but the angle got stopped very early because they wouldn't let Punk win anything. Good match here and better than I was expecting to be sure.

We look at the Mania card, which looks way better than I remember it.

Edge vs. The Miz

This is non-title of course. Edge is very aggressive to start but Miz hides in the corner like any heel worth anything. Off to a headlock by the Canadian as we hear about Miz's NXT rookie: Daniel Bryan. Edge easily takes him down to the mat and Miz is frustrated. Miz heads to the floor where Edge sends him back first into the barricade. Back in and Miz tries to get a big boot up in the corner, only for Edge to slip by him and ram Miz's face into the mat. Miz sends him out to the floor to FINALLY get a breather as we take a break.

Back with Miz holding a chinlock for a bit before getting two off a running knee to the face. A running big boot to the back of Edge's head in the corner connects and the Canadian is in big trouble. Miz goes up top for an ax handle but Edge blocks it and comes back with a flapjack to take over. The Canadian hits a Russian (legsweep) on the American as Daniel Bryan is watching in the back. The Edge-O-Matic gets two but Miz decks him in the head to slow Edge down. The Skull Crushing Finale is countered into an Impaler and the spear is good for the pin.

Rating: C. Miz wasn't quite up to the level of Edge yet but at the same time, Edge was nowhere near back to what his top form was. That ankle injury was the latest in a LONG line of injuries for Edge and he was only starting to get back to normal when he had to retire the next year because of his neck. Not a great main event but it did its job well enough.

Surprisingly enough no Jericho run in to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. This was a nice surprise and a fun reminder of why Smackdown used to be so fun. Back in the day you would get entertaining shows like this one with a ton of wrestling and some nice quality matches that actually ACCOMPLISHED SOMETHING. 2010 was a good year for the blue guys but don't worry: WWE would manage to screw it up soon enough.

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Why I Watch Wrestling (Bit More On Punk vs. Cena)

Last night was a great example. For every lame show, for every stupid promo, for every time Brooke Hogan has to appear on my TV, there's a chance, albeit a slim one, that you'll get something like what we got last night. Last night's main event was everything I could ask for in a wrestling match: it had build, it had drama, it had action, it had surprises, it had a white hot crowd, it meant something in the long run, and I didn't expect it.

In short, I watch wrestling because you never know what you might get to see on any given night. That's what makes it so fun to watch. Yeah it's probably false hope most of the time, but you never can tell what they might bust out. Awesome match last night still.

Oh and one more thing: why is it being compared to the MITB

match? They're totally different things and of course the PPV match should have been better. It's not a fair comparison to make, but this is the internet so it's going to be made anyway.

Monday Night Raw – February 25, 2013: Perhaps The Best TV Match I Have Ever Seen

Monday Night Raw

Date: February 25, 2013

Location: American Airlines Center, Dallas, Texas

Commentators: Jerry Lawler, Michael Cole

Tonight is a big show as we have two major matches: Punk vs. Cena for Cena's title shot and Vince having a fight with Paul Heyman. Other than that, Undertaker returned at a house show on Saturday and there's a chance that he could be back tonight. There's also the possibility of Lesnar being in the house, but most importantly of all: WE GET TO MAKE FUN OF GLENN BECK! Odds are we get a midget sighting. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Brock attacking Vince a few weeks back as well as the scene from last week with Cena challenging Punk.

Here's Vince on crutches to open the show. He says we need something big on Raw every week until Wrestlemania so why not start with a fight. Vince should be able to do this one one leg or no legs, so let's bring out the Ultimate Fighter, Paul Heyman. Cue Heyman himself in what I guess you would call fighting clothes. He's in workout pants and what looks to be a workout sweatshirt.

Heyman insults the Dallas Cowboys before talking about how he's seen

Vince take on every promoter as well as the US Government. He offers Vince a chance to make an executive decision, but as he's talking Paul spears down Vince and takes out the knee. A crutch shot to the leg keeps Vince down but Vince blocks the other crutch shot. He hits Heyman in the back with it but here's Lesnar.

Heyman has rolled to the floor so it's just Brock and Vince alone in the ring. Lesnar stares Vince down and is ready to go but Vince wisely begs off. Cue HHH as Vince bails to the floor. He's got the leather jacket and the water bottle so you can tell this is serious. The fight is on immediately and HHH sends Lesnar into the post, apparently busting him open. Another post shot has Lesnar reeling and a clothesline puts Brock into the timekeeper's area.

HHH goes to get a crutch but it allows Brock to fight back. Lesnar hits an AA (not an F5 but an AA) to put HHH onto the announce table. We head back inside with Brock bringing in a chair, only to walk into a spinebuster. A big chair shot to Brock's back sends him to the floor and there's a BIG blood stain on the mat. HHH stands tall.

Ryback vs. Dolph Ziggler

No intro for Mr. MITB. Ryback easily picks Ziggler up and throws him around to start but walks into a dropkick for one. Ziggler tries to keep things moving fast but he charges into a powerslam to put him right back down. A few chops in the corner stagger Ziggler as the fans chant Goldberg. Ryback hits a modified Oklahoma Stampede (powerslam out of the corner) to send Ziggler to the floor as we take a break.

Back with Ziggler caught in a long delayed vertical suplex. We see about twenty seconds of it so who knows how long it actually was. Dolph rolls to the floor so Ryback goes to retrieve him, only to have Langston take Ryback's head off with a clothesline. Back in and Ryback shoves Ziggler away, only to get caught in a running DDT for two.

The Fameasser misses so there's a sleeper on Ryback instead. Ryback counters with a kind of Stunner and starts throwing Ziggler around like he isn't even there. AJ gets on the apron but Langston's interference doesn't work. Ryback hits a kind of spinebuster to Ziggler and Dolph is

Shell Shocked for the pin at 11:08.

Rating: C+. It's nice to see Ryback get a big win again and who better to get one on than the reigning king of the jobbers of WWE? Langston vs. Ryback is likely going to be talked about now, despite the fact that they don't need to fight just because they're similar. Anyway, decent match here and good to see Ryback get a win for a change.

Trailer for The Call, starring Halle Berry and with David Otunga.

Here's CM Punk with something to say. He says that tonight is a night of history and a night that people are going to tell their grandchildren about. It's the end as well as the beginning but tonight isn't about Wrestlemania or the people. It isn't even about the WWE Championship. It's not about the future and what is more important than the Rock: it's about PUNK. Punk goes into a big rant about how he important he is before finally saying that in this world, he is god.

The latest inductee into the WWE Hall of Fame: Donald Trump. Given how much he's done with Wrestlemania over the years, this shouldn't be a big surprise.

Great Khali vs. Mark Henry

Khali chops him into the corner to start and Henry rolls to the floor. Back inside and Henry easily hits the World's Strongest Slam for the pin at 1:24. This was nothing.

We get a look at Marine 3 starring the Miz.

Fandango debuts Friday on Smackdown.

Here's Miz for MizTV with guests Alberto Del Rio, Jack Swagger and Zeb Colter. After a break, Miz wants to talk to Jack and Zeb to start things off. Zeb says he's here to talk to Gleen Beck but since he chickened out, he'll take Del Rio instead. Colter talks about the problem in America: eleven million undocumented workers who are all calling for amnesty instead of being deported. Those eleven million illegals (his word) are making it harder for Americans by taking things that belong to honest Americans. Alberto cuts Colter off but Miz says let the champion talk.

Miz asks Del Rio how hard it is to become a citizen in Mexico. Colter says it takes ten years to become a citizen in Mexico because of all the corruption. Also foreigners can't own property in Mexico. Colter wants to know what's wrong with Mexicans in that regard. Zeb says this isn't personal, but rather it's about what Del Rio represents to his people. Colter wants there to only be one Alberto Del Rio success story because he doesn't want more criminals in his country.

Del Rio goes on a rant about how America belongs to everyone and how America is built on immigrants. He talks about the American Dream of working hard to make everything possible. Del Rio calls himself living proof of that and says Swagger and Colter are hiding behind the Constitution like bullies. Swagger says WE THE PEOPLE will see Del Rio at Wrestlemania.

During the commercial, Colter yelled at Miz for conducting a biased interview, allowing Swagger to run Miz over with a clothesline.

Antonio Cesaro vs. Randy Orton

Orton hits a quick elbow to start followed by a t-bone suplex of all things for two. Cesaro comes back with the gutwrench suplex for two of his own and we hit the chinlock. Orton easily fights out of it and hits the powerslam to load up the Elevated DDT. Cesaro will have none of that though and snaps Randy's neck across the top rope. The backbreaker puts Cesaro into the corner though, only for him to get a boot up. Cesaro goes to the middle rope and dives into the RK0 for the surprise pin at 3:02.

Rating: C-. The ending was good but did we really need to see the US Champion lose in three minutes completely clean? That's the second straight loss in a row on Raw for Cesaro which makes me think he'll be champion for a long time to come. Nothing to see here and I have no idea what either guy will be doing at Mania.

HELL NO argues over which of them could beat the Prime Time Players on their own. Vickie and Maddox come up to annoy the champions. Due to what Kane and Bryan argued over earlier, the match against the Players will have Kane with one arm tied behind his back and Bryan blindfolded.

We get a trailer for Wrestlemania 21 (you read that right) with JBL and Cena imitating the climax of A Few Good Men.

Next up: Sheamus' Oscar snubs?

Here's Sheamus in a suit to talk about the Oscars last night. He watched the Oscars last night and he has a bone to pick with the Academy: they ignored Wade Barrett. This leads us to the trailer for Dead Man Down which has nothing from Barrett in it. Sheamus shows us another clip with Barrett in the background but not saying a word. "Tom Hanks wishes he could have done Forrest Gump that good!"

This brings out Barrett with a rebuttal. Wade talks about how the Irish love green and that's apparent right now given how jealous Sheamus clearly is right now. Tomorrow night Barrett is going to be walking a red carpet while Sheamus returns his suit. Sheamus says make sure the camera get your good side but with a nose like that, the good side doesn't exist. They nearly brawl but Barrett bails so he can look good at his premiere tomorrow.

Cody Rhodes vs. R-Truth

Damien Sandow is on commentary. Truth speeds things up to start and Damien calls the hip thrusting disgusting. Cody kicks Truth's leg in the corner and hits a release front suplex to take over. The announcers talk about bromances which apparently appears in the dictionary. Cody hooks a full nelson on the mat but Truth fights up. Cody sends him into the rope but gets caught in a bad looking Little Jimmy for the pin at 2:24.

Post match Sandow runs in and is quickly dispatched.

We get a Zeb Colter/Jack Swagger video about Americans losing their jobs to illegal immigrants. They promise to correct the wrongs in this country.

HELL NO vs. Prime Time Players

Bryan is blindfolded and Kane has an arm tied behind his back. Bryan and Titus start but Daniel grabs the referee for the NO Lock by mistake. The Players mess with Bryan with the whistles and Titus hits a clothesline to

the back of the head to take over. Off to Young who sends Bryan to the floor where Kane tries to help him. Bryan hits Kane by mistake before heading back in. Young misses a charge into the post and Kane tags himself in. After beating up Young for a bit, a one armed chokeslam is enough to pin Darren at 3:30.

Rating: D+. This was your standard comedy match that was missing the comedy. I'm not sure what this was supposed to accomplish other than making the Players look even more worthless than they already do. Bryan and Kane still fight but they still win matches so who knows where it's going. Other than Shield, is there anyone around that could beat them anyway?

We recap the opening fight with HHH vs. Lesnar.

Here's the Shield with something to say. Ambrose talks about how they're what's best for WWE right now and any three man team they send out will be dispatched just like the others. Reigns says believe in the Shield or be turned into dust. Rollins talks about the three wins they've had over super team after super team. He asks if there's anyone else to fight them and here's Sheamus. He says come up here and fight him but as Ambrose and Reigns go after him, Orton sneaks in with an RKO to take out Rollins. I saw those two team up against Shield at a house show a few weeks ago so they've been practicing.

Jack Swagger vs. The Miz

This was set up by Swagger's sneak attack earlier. Miz knocks him to the floor to start but Swagger rams him into the apron to take over. Back in and a shot to the back staggers Miz as the fans chant for the non-super patriot. Miz kicks away at Jack's knee but gets clotheslined right back down. A suplex floors Miz again and there's the Vader Bomb for two. Off to a quick armbar on Miz but he comes back with a neckbreaker to get himself a breather.

Swagger suplexes him back down for two but charges into a boot. Miz hits the running clothesline in the corner followed by the top rope ax handle for two. A sunset flip gets two more for Miz but Swagger breaks up a DDT. He shoves Miz into the ropes where Miz's ankle is tied up, giving Swagger

the opening he needs. A chop block takes Miz down and the Patriot Lock ends this at 7:13.

Rating: C. Swagger isn't terrible but he's still too similar to what he was just a year or so ago. Either way, the match here was basic but ok. I'm guessing there isn't going to be any public embarrassment for Swagger after the incident last week, but maybe they're going to punish him behind the scenes. Match was just ok.

After Lawler and Cole plug Sonic for a bit, we look at a video from the end of last week with the debut of the new title and Punk attacking Cena.

We get a Tout from HHH about Lesnar and we see the opening brawl again.

Here are some Touts from fans about what we saw earlier. Nothing of note here.

Cena talks about how important this match against Punk is. He talks about how tonight it's about to going to Wrestlemania and he requested this match to prove that he's back. If you still believe in him, you'll believe that everyone else's time is up and our time is now.

We get a clip of Robot Combat League hosted by Chris Jericho.

We get a clip of Undertaker returning at a show in Waco this past weekend.

John Cena vs. CM Punk

The winner gets the shot at Rock at Wrestlemania. They have a ton of time left too. After some big match intros we're ready to go. The fans are of course split on Cena as we get some chain wrestling to start. Punk gets in the ropes to break up a headlock before putting on one of his own. A hip toss puts Punk on the floor and we take a break. Back with Punk getting backdropped but popping back up with a clothesline to take control again. A neckbreaker gets two on cena and it's off to a neck vice.

Cena powers out of it and slams Punk to the mat before hooking a front facelock to slow things down. Off to a headlock instead but Punk shoves

him off and hits a leg lariat for two. Off to a CM chinlock now but Cena fights back up. He hits a shoulder block but Punk ducks an attempt at a second. The suicide dive takes out Cena on the floor and we take another break.

Back with Cena escaping an abdominal stretch and hitting the shoulders again. There's the ProtoBomb but Punk counters into the Anaconda Vice. Cena rolls over into a cover for two but Punk hits a swinging neckbreaker for two more. Sweet sequence there. Cena picks the leg for the STF but Punk makes the rope.

The springboard clothesline gets two more on Cena but Punk loads up a second, only for Cena to step to the side and hook the STF. Punk slips out and puts the Vice on again but Cena counters into a Crossface (called the STF by that lunkhead Cole). Punk rolls backwards into a small package for two and both guys are down again. They slug it out and Cena is getting madder on each punch he throws.

Punk kicks him in the ribs but the high kick misses. There's the ProtoBomb but Punk kicks him in the head to escape the Shuffle. The GTS is countered into a sunset flip attempt but Punk sits on Cena for two. The bulldog by Punk is countered and there's the Shuffle. AA is countered as is the GTS but Cena hits a Batista Bomb for two. The place is losing their minds on these kickouts. John goes up top but Punk gets up before Cena can try anything.

Cena blocks whatever Punk is trying and knocks him down, setting up the top rope Fameasser for two. Cena can barely follow up though and the high kick puts in the corner. Punk hits a WICKED running knee in the corner but Cena IMMEDIATELY hits the AA for two. Punk rolls to the floor and Cena has no idea what else he can do here. Cena goes out after him but gets sent HARD into the post. He isn't moving an inch at nine but is somehow in by ten.

Back in and the GTS gets two and now Punk is ticked off. Another GTS is countered into an STF attempt and even with Punk trying to fight off the hold, Cena locks it in. Punk raises his hand to tap but SOMEHOW gets to the ropes. He kicks Cena in the knee and busts out a piledriver for a

VERY close two and we get multiple frustrated covers. Punk goes up top and the Macho Elbow misses, allowing Cena to hit a FREAKING HURRICANRANA and the AA for the pin at 26:32.

Rating: A+. WOW. This doesn't happen often but I was sitting there watching this match with my jaw hanging open. Those near falls were as good as I have seen this side of Austin vs. Rock at Wrestlemania and I had no idea what they were going to do until the ending. This was a PPV main event for free on Raw and was one of the best TV matches I have ever seen. Absolutely amazing and to people who say "well it wasn't THAT good", you're wrong. Period.

Cena poses to end the show.

Overall Rating: B+. I usually write these ratings before the main event but I had to redo it because of that match. That raised this from a B- to what it is here. That's happened maybe once in all the years I've been doing this. The main event really is that good and you need to find a copy of it as soon as you can.

As for the rest of the show, it wasn't a masterpiece but the most important thing here is that we can see the Wrestlemania card taking shape. We have our title matches and tonight it looks like some stuff was set up, but Shield vs. Orton/Sheamus doesn't make sense as it looked like they were setting up Sheamus vs. Barrett. Either is a good option but the tag match probably fits better. Either way, the energy tonight was a good sign and I'm fired up for the Old School show next week. Oh and did I mention a GREAT main event? Very good but not great stuff here.

Results

Ryback b. Dolph Ziggler – Shell Shock

Mark Henry b. Great Khali – World's Strongest Slam

Randy Orton b. Antonio Cesaro – RK0

R-Truth b. Cody Rhodes – Little Jimmy

HELL NO b. Prime Time Players – Chokeslam to Young

John Cena b. CM Punk – Attitude Adjustment

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OLD SCHOOL RAW NEXT WEEK!!!!

OH

FREAKING

YES!!!!!!

WWE Hall of Fame: Class of 2012

The last full one to date. Edge

This was obvious from the moment Edge said that he had to retire due to injury. While Edge is a FAR cry from one of the all time elites, he does have arguably the most impressive resume ever provided you don't dig too deep into it. There was never a title that he didn't win and he held more championship than anyone in company history. You have to put him in the Hall of Fame for that alone.

Four Horsemen

For me this is the real headliner. They're the greatest stable of all time and had one of the most powerful rosters ever. If any team or faction is allowed in it should be them and that's all there is to it. Easy yes.

Ron Simmons

I go back and forth on this one. Simmons was indeed the first black man to hold a world title and had a decent tag career with Bradshaw. That being said though, he never was much of note as WCW Champion and the vast majority of his career was spent as a glorified enforcer. Is it enough to get him into the Hall of Fame? I can let him in with a yes, but it's a yes that is so shaky that a stiff breeze would change my mind.

Yokozuna

This is another good example of someone who was very good when he was good and very bad when he was bad. When he was bad, he was a disturbing looking man due to his enormous weight. When he was good, he was the top heel in the company for the better part of a year. That being said, it was quite a solid year and I think that alone is enough to make him world champion. I can go yes here again, but it's also not a solid yes.

Mil Mascaras

Think what you want about the numerous stories involving his ego and refusal to sell a lot of stuff, Mascaras is a HUGE star in Mexico and one of the biggest stars in the history of

wrestling. He appeared in the WWF back in the 70s through the 90s as well as having major appearances worldwide. This is another of those guys that you have to have in a wrestling Hall of Fame if you want it to be taken seriously.

Mike Tyson

I usually dislike the celebrity inductions, but given how big a deal Tyson was in 1998, I have no problem here. Tyson was a huge boom to WWE and made Wrestlemania 14 as big of a deal as it was. Another easy yes here.

That's it for the complete Hall of Fame classes up to this point. As is the case with 99% of stuff WWE does, a lot of it is great, a lot of it is poor, a lot of it scratches your head and makes you wonder what they were thinking. The WWE Hall of Fame can't be taken seriously due to how easy it is to get in along with some of the older inductees. The problem is they've inducted too many people, making further classes far weaker by comparison. There are also a bunch of names that need to be inducted but haven't been for whatever reason, so it's hard to take this thing seriously. It's fun to see though and that's the important idea.

I'll look at the 2013 class on the day of the inductions.

HHH Returns On Raw

Two guesses on who he came out to fight. Hint: His name is Brock Lesnar. We all knew this was coming and there's nothing we can do to stop it. What a waste for the sake of HHH's ego.

Donald Trump Inducted Into WWE Hall of Fame

I have zero problem with this. He hosted two Wrestlemanias, appeared at Mania 7 and was involved in one of the biggest drawing shows of all time. Trump may be slimy, but he's done a lot with WWE and I have no issue with putting him in.

Thought of the Day: Statute of Limitations

I'm watching Wrestlemania 14 and this question occurs to me: Shamrock keeps beating up referees after he wins the Intercontinental Title so the referee reverses his decision. Even though the match ended three minutes earlier. What is the statute of limitations for changing an ending to a match? Could Shamrock have cut Hebner off in the parking lot six months later and have the decision reversed there? Wouldn't the thirty day title defense requirement be up for whomever the title is returned to? I can feel the walls of the

wrestling time continuum crumbling as I think about this.

On This Day: February 25, 2013 – Wrestle War 1990: One Heck Of A Pit Stop Before Sting's Time

Wrestlewar 1990

Date: February 25, 1990

Location: Greensboro Coliseum, Greensboro, North Carolina

Attendance: 9,894

Commentators: Jim Ross, Terry Funk

We're into 1990 now and Funk has stepped into commentary, so we need a new feud for Flair. That man would have been Sting who had been thrown out of the Horsemen on February 6. At Starrcade, Sting had pinned Flair to win the Iron Man Tournament and asked for a title shot. Flair snapped and turned the Horsemen heel again, destroying Sting in the process. That night, Sting legit hurt his knee so his title match tonight (which he was supposed to win) was postponed. The replacement? Lex Luger, who has had more classics with Flair than should be legally allowed. Let's get to it.

This show is called Wild Thing. The NWA had a habit of adding random titles to shows which have nothing to do with them for the most part.

Dan Spivey is hurt and may be out tonight.

JR and Terry run down the card.

Teddy Long says Spivey is indeed hurt and there will be a replacement for him tonight. There's another surprise later as well.

Kevin Sullivan/Buzz Sawyer vs. Dynamic Dudes

Sawyer is insane and that's about all you need to know about him. He starts with Ace and these people are a bit more receptive than the Philly crowd was in our last show. Speaking of last shows, this is the final major show that Sawyer was on for WCW if that means anything for you. Ace sends him to the floor and a brawl breaks out on the outside. Shane and Sullivan come in and the Dudes keep control with the arm work.

Ace comes in to work on the arm more but Sullivan gets a tag. He also gets in a fight with Sawyer, much to the Dudes' amusement. That's smart: why break up a fight when you can get a breather? Sawyer's arm goes into the post so Shane cranks on it. Out to the floor with Sawyer taking over. Sunset flip gets two for Ace and there's the tag to Shane. Buzz immediately takes him down and hooks a bearhug to take Shane to the mat.

Sullivan comes in and pops Ace, which draws him in so that Sullivan can throw Shane to the floor. Everything breaks down and Johnny botches a flying headscissors. Sawyer goes up and hits a big old flying splash for the pin. That's the interim Raw GM and the Executive Vice President of Talent Relations for you. Funk called it the Jam Sandwich, which is something Brodus should use.

Rating: C-. Not much here as none of these guys was much to watch at this point. I've never been a big fan of Shane and Ace is just ok. He never was all that good as his size became an issue for him but he was too slim to be a power guy. Not a very good match with a total contrast in styles that didn't work at all.

Norman the Lunatic, who is a goofy character that isn't all there upstairs, hits on Missy Hyatt.

Cactus Jack Manson vs. Norman the Lunatic

Yes it's Mick Foley and no he doesn't mean a thing yet. He's pretty much just thrown onto the card here, much like Cuban Assassin was last time. Jack jumps him to start but gets thrown to the floor with ease. JR: "This will not be a battle of wits. It may be a battle of nitwits." Also Jack's favorite color is light black and wants to be the foreman of the Double Cross Ranch.

Jack rams Norman's head into the buckle and Norman says do it again. A quick bearhug goes on Jack but he's soon whipped over the corner and out to the floor in a big crash. Headbutt knocks Jack off the apron but misses a charge into the post. Back in and Cactus rips at his face. Cactus pounds him down and it's off to a chinlock. The electric chair drop puts Jack down but a splash misses. Jack tries a sunset flip but Norman drops onto him for the pin.

Rating: D. Yeah it was bad but Foley of course would get a lot more going for him. Norman is more famous as Bastian Booger and a lot of other bad characters in WWF. Jack was clearly going to be a guy that bumped like mad, but at the end of the day what sets him apart is that he made people care about him as opposed to guys like say New Jack.

Jim Cornette talks about how things change but some things stay the same. Tonight the Midnights have the Rock N Roll Express, which is something that never changes.

Rock N Roll Express vs. Midnight Express

This is another one of those matches where the starting rating rises up from a C to a B. These guys feuded for probably 6 years on and off and had more classics than you could shake a stick at. Why you would want to shake a stick at it is beyond me but you get the idea. Gibson vs. Stan gets us going. Lane dives to the mat and they counter each other a lot. Gibson counters a counter and drops a fist onto Lane's head to take

over.

Cornette gets in an argument with Nick Patrick and wants to box him. This is an old spot they did which always gets a big reaction. Cornette is dispatched quickly and it's Morton vs. Lane now. The fans are into this too. Bobby gets knocked to the floor and Lane shoves him down as well. We never got a big singles match between those two and I think that's for the best.

Lane vs. Bobby now and they speed things up. Nothing seems to be coming out of the shove from a few moments ago. Off to a test of strength and Morton is losing. He climbs up Bobby, stands on his shoulders, and jumps onto Lane in the corner. Gibson runs off Lane and the Midnights are knocked to the floor. Cornette tries to get in and falls over the top rope so Gibson knocks back down. Both Midnights are double clotheslined to the floor as well and it's been one sided for about the first eight minutes.

Back in now and it's Gibson vs. Lane but Lane still can't get anything going. Morton comes in for a double elbow but gets sent outside. Never mind again as Lane goes into the post. Now it's Eaton again and it's a slugout. Terry gets into this and they both tumble to the floor. Outside Lane slams Morton and the Midnights take over.

Now we get into a much more traditional tag match which was popularized if not perfected by these teams, making this a fun match. Morton is sent to the floor and rammed into various metal objects. He manages a sunset flip but Cornette grabs the referee. Morton tries an O'Connor Roll but Lane makes a blind tag and hooks a neckbreaker for two. Eaton goes after the arm with a single arm DDT and into a hammerlock.

Lane comes in for a quick reverse chinlock before bringing in Eaton for a top rope elbow. Back to the arm by Lane. Man the Midnights tag in fast. Eaton works on the arm again with the

hammerlock and the Midnights set for the Rocket Launcher. It hits the knees though and here's Gibson. Everything breaks down but he's still 2-1. The Midnights load up the Flapjack but Gibson rolls through for the pin on Lane.

Rating: B+. Oh come on it's the Midnights vs. Rock N Roll. There's practically no way that this can be screwed up. It's a great speed match and they know each other so well that they're going to have a good match through familiarity if nothing else. Fun stuff here but somehow not their best work together.

The Road Warriors have Sting armbands on and are ready for the Chicago street fight up next.

Skyscrapers vs. Road Warriors

Street fight. The Skyscrapers are almost a revolving door of members and in this case it's Mark Callous and a masked man who is played by Mike Enos. The Skyscrapers have Teddy Long to counter Paul Ellering. Long comes in to fight Ellering and is knocked to the floor with one punch. Everyone is in street clothes. What street these would be normal on I have no idea but the thought is there.

The Warriors dominate to start and here comes Doom for no apparent reason. They're in suits and Teddy goes to join them. Enos gets in some offense to take over (he's just the masked man here but I'll be calling him Enos to keep things clearer) but it's pretty short lived. The Road Warriors shrug it off and Hawk hits a running clothesline off the apron to Callous. They get back in and this slows down even more. The Warriors throw Callous out and the Doomsday Device kills Enos easily for the pin.

Rating: D. I love the Road Warriors but they need the right kind of team to make things work. The Skyscrapers were never quite a team that worked, at least not here. They were good at destroying jobbers and small people but having brawls like

this was never really anything worth seeing.

Doom comes in post match and brawls with the Warriors in a much more entertaining fight. This feud never really happened as the Warriors jumped to the WWF in June.

US Tag Titles: Freebirds vs. Brian Pillman/Z-Man

The Birds are challenging here. They get sent to the floor immediately and the champs steal their clothes and dance around as Badstreet plays in the background. Funny moment. The crowd is all over the Birds. They weren't much in the ring but they were heat machines. Today is Flair's birthday according to JR. We finally get going with Brian vs. Hayes. Brian knocks him around with a clothesline and Garvin fluffs his hair.

Speaking of Garvin here he is and he gets Z-Man. Z takes him down with a headlock but misses a dropkick. Garvin, ever the Rhodes Scholar, ducks his head and gets kicked in the face. Back to Brian for another headlock. Hayes comes back in and things are going slowly to start, implying that they have a lot of time to work with. Sunset flip with a great jump gets two for Pillman.

Z-Man works on the arm and goes into a Fujiwar Armbar to Hayes. Back to Garvin who loses any advantage that Hayes had gotten on Z-Man. Pillman comes in as the fans seem a bit distracted. Hayes comes in and hooks a sleeper (sleep hold according to Ross) as JR talks about Paul Boesch, the promoter of Houston Wrestling for decades, demonstrating this hold in the second World War.

Brian escapes and sends him into the corner but charges into a great left hand to put him down. Brian rolls through a cross body for two. Back to Garvin as this is going a lot longer than I was expecting it to go. Since Garvin can't manage to keep Brian in one place he makes the tag to Z-Man. Z-Man puts the Z Lock (sleeper) on Hayes but Garvin comes off the top for the save.

Garvin hooks a chinlock as this match has gone well over fifteen minutes so far. Now they mix things up with a Hayes chinlock. After 18 minutes, we're told this is a rematch from the finals of the tournament where Z-Man and Pillman won the titles in the first place. Z-Man gets a small package for two. Hayes is like enough of that and goes back to the chinlock. JR thinks Hayes looks like Alice Cooper. Terry wants to know if Hayes knows who Buffalo Bill is.

Hayes goes up and kind of steps off with no significant contact being made. Back to Garvin as this needs to end really soon. Who decided to give the Birds over twenty minutes? Top rope fist gets two for Hayes after a non-tag. Bulldog gets two as Pillman breaks it up. Back to the chinlock #4 but Zenk drops him with a DDT of his own. There's the tag to Pillman and the fans care more than I expected them to. Pillman cleans house but Hayes brings in a title but Pillman comes off the top with a cross body as the title is being taken out to retain the titles.

Rating: D. Technically the match was fine but MY GOODNESS this ran long. It clocks in at almost twenty four minutes which is just far too long. Pillman and Zenk can easily go that long but the Birds were already through their whole set of stuff at about 10 minutes in. The solution of course? Go 14 minutes past that. WAY too long and if you cut this to like 12 minutes it's probably an okish match.

The Birds DDT both champs post match.

The Steiners are all fired up and dedicate their match to Sting. Rick calls himself a big bad bully beater upper.

Tag Titles: Ole Anderson/Arn Anderson vs. Steiner Brothers

This was supposed to be Tully/Arn but he failed a drug test and was pretty much finished in mainstream wrestling so they brought out Ole in the finals part of his in ring career to fill in for him. Scott starts with Arn and the ring is quickly

cleared by pure power. The Steiners are champions if that's unclear. The Andersons try to double team and that fails as well. Rick and Scott go after the knee of Ole so Ole bails and almost says some very bad words.

Rick vs. Ole now and it turns into another brawl very quickly with the champs clearing the ring again. Rick hooks on a headlock to Arn and JR talks about Rick wanting to be an elementary school science teacher. Terry wants to know why he isn't anyone's favorite wrestler. Arn gets in a knee and goes up but has Rick waiting on him. For once a Horseman thinks better of it and climbs down.

Arn bails to the floor and both Steiners are in again. That's been a habit of theirs tonight. Back to Ole with a headlock on Scott which goes nowhere. Arn comes in again and takes an atomic drop, allowing him to do his great selling of it. Figure Four is broken up by Ole who then comes in legally. For some reason Ole tries amateur stuff on Scott who easily suplexes him and tags in Rick.

The Anderson get an advantage for what must have been a good three seconds but Rick suplexes Arn to stop it cold. Ole tries to hit Rick in the head and that goes about as well as anything else has. The Andersons are brothers at this point for those of you that try to keep track of how they're related. They go after Rick's arm which is their trademark. Ole tries to hit Rick in the head which is enough for Rick to make the tag back to Scott.

Scott and Arn go outside and Scott accidentally clotheslines the post. You know Arn is going to go after that like Elvis on a pound of bacon. Ole comes back in and the arm work continues. For some reason the Andersons keep switching off from the arm to general attacks which never work. A Vader Bomb gets knees and there's a Frankensteiner and a hot tag to Rick. In a fast ending, Rick punches them both down and a fast small package pins Ole.

Rating: C-. It's not bad but again this was long and not that great. The Andersons were a lot stupider than you would expect from them here which is very Un-Horsemenlike. It's much better than the previous one but it's still long and boring. It was too slow and these guys didn't click at all for the most part.

The Andersons get in a double team move on the arm of Scott post match to injure it.

Lex says he's nervous but he's going to Rack Flair tonight and win the title.

Flair says that he's great and has Woman says that Lex needs to get his engine started, whatever that means.

NWA World Title: Ric Flair vs. Lex Luger

Sting is with Lex while Woman is with Flair. The idea here is that Sting was supposed to get the title shot here but legit injured his knee which makes this out to be a "tragedy" according to the introductions. This is the main event and we have 45 minutes to go during Flair's entrance. Chain wrestling to start with no one having an advantage. Flair shoves the referee and is shoved right back.

Flair agrees to a test of strength and down goes Naitch. Flair bails to the floor and says Wooo a lot. Lex knocks him to the floor again so Ric takes the walk. Luger chases him down and the beating continues. Lex is US Champion here. A gorilla press by Luger puts Flair down so Flair tries the chops. Those do about as well as they do against Sting and Lex is all fired up.

There's a bear hug which Luger bends forward for a two count. Luger hits ten punches in the corner but Flair ducks a clothesline and Luger falls to the floor. Flair chops away outside and back in they go. Scratch that as Flair dumps him again and calls for Woman to get on the apron. With the referee distracted Flair sends him into the barricade and

chops him down. Flair punches him back down to the floor as I guess he's looking for the countout.

Back in for more than ten seconds this time and Flair drops a knee on the head. Another knee drop hits for two. Lex pops up for his comeback but misses a corner charge and is right back down again. This is one of those matches that's hard to make fun of because they both know what they're doing and have such great chemistry together that there's not much they can't do together.

Flair hooks a hammerlock and stomps on the arm. Lex starts coming back again so Flair pokes him in the eyes, which Funk calls the Achilles Tendon of big men. Luger gets caught in another hammerlock and when he tries to punch his way out of it, the referee stops the fist, allowing Flair to poke him in the eye again. Ric works on the arm even more but Lex grabs the throat to break it up. He throws Flair into the corner for the Flair Flip and we go to the floor.

Flair chops Lex again and Luger is all fired up. Back in and Flair is caught in a sleeper which puts him down. The champ gets his foot on the ropes and manages a belly to back to escape. Luger suplexes him right back and goes after the knee. He wraps it around the post and tries a figure four. Even JR basically says it's awful as he spins the wrong way, making him look like he's a nine year old imitating it.

Ric fights up and chops some more but walks into a powerslam for two. The pop on the kickout was big as the fans thought it was over. Flair still can't get that the chops don't work and Lex is all fired up. After a quick exchange outside, Luger backslides him for two. Luger punches him in the corner but Flair atomic drops him, hurting Lex's knee in the process. Where are these knee injuries in matches against people not named Flair?

A pair of top rope axhandles gets two for Flair. Butterfly

suplex gets two. Here's a sleeper by Flair as he hasn't gone after the knee much yet. That gets broken after awhile and NOW it's knee time. We're probably half an hour into this. Flair works on the knee in his usual manner as Sting comes back to ringside. Sting cheers Luger on enough for him to reverse the hold and it's broken up.

He slaps Lex to fire him up and Flair bails fast. Out to the floor and Lex no sells a whip into the barricade. There's a gorilla press and Flair goes up, only to get slammed down. Luger clotheslines him to the floor then suplexes him back in for two. There's the powerslam which Luger earlier said would set up the Rack. Woman distracts Luger, allowing Flair to knee Lex in the back, crushing the referee in the process.

Lex clotheslines Flair down but there's no referee. A superplex kills Flair dead again but the Andersons run in because there's no referee. There's the Torture Rack and the referee is back up, but the Andersons go after Sting. Luger drops the hold when Flair is about to give up, going to save his friend. The Horsemen keep him out there long enough for the count out and a HUGE boo from the crowd. Sting's day was coming soon though.

Rating: A. See, THIS is how you book a screwjob finish. It made perfect sense for Lex to go out there, meaning that for once he wasn't an idiot. They had the crowd into this and when you can do that during a forty minute match, that's usually a great sign. It was an excellent match and the ending is about as perfect as it could have been. Luger would get a rematch the next month in a cage and then it was Sting's turn.

The Steiners come out for the save. Good thing they couldn't be out 40 seconds earlier to let Lex get the title isn't it?

Overall Rating: B-. Still not a classic but it was a better show than Halloween Havoc for sure. The two later tag matches weren't anything of note and you can always find a good

Express vs. Express match. Still though, this was a good show overall and there really isn't anything all that terrible on it. I'd highly recommend the clipped version or one with a fast forward button at the ready.

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WWE Hall of Fame: Class of 2011

This is one of the lighter classes, except for the headliner.

Shawn Michaels

Shawn Michaels is a yes vote. Moving on.

Legion of Doom

They're the most dominant tag team ever, bar none. Yes the Dudleys won a lot more titles, but to even suggest that the Dudleys are at the Road Warriors' level is laughable. The Road Warriors feuded with the Horsemen in the late 80s. That alone makes them a huge deal. This isn't even remotely close and it's an easy yes.

That pretty much ends the good Hall of Fame picks this year. Let's get through the rest of them.

Sunny

I can accept this one given how insanely popular she was, but the first Diva inducted should have been Liz. Considering the INSANE legal trouble Sunny has gotten into recently, this is one of those that WWE likely regrets. Also, Sable should have gone in before Sunny. I'm ok with this one but it definitely has its flaws.

Jim Duggan

Uh.....yeah. Duggan is in that group of people with Hillbilly Jim and Koko B. Ware: he didn't accomplish much (although Duggan accomplished a lot more than they did) but he's so beloved that it's hard to turn him down. It's just hard not to like this guy on some level as he never came off as menacing but rather a guy who loved America and wanted to do the right thing, while also being incredibly goofy. At least Duggan won something of note in his career, as he won the first Royal Rumble as well as the WCW US and TV Titles. As for being in the Hall of Fame, I'll go hide in a shelter somewhere before telling the fans that no, he doesn't belong in there. I feel dirty for saying it though.

Bob Armstrong

This is another one where it's more because of his family than anything else. Bob is the father of wrestlers Steve Armstrong (wrestled in WCW in the early 90s), Brad Armstrong (good wrestler in WCW), Brian Armstrong (more famous as Road Dogg) and referee Scott Armstrong (the blonde one with that annoying hitch in his count). As for Bob, he wrestled under a mask for years as the Bullet in Alabama and other parts of the south. While he's a big deal down there, that's really about all he's done. To me, that isn't enough to be in the Hall of Fame.

Abdullah the Butcher

This falls under the same category as the Sheik: yeah he's legendary, yeah he's been around forever, yeah he was innovative, no I don't want him in the Hall of Fame due to all of the stuff he's done to hurt wrestling by making hardcore more popular. That's all there is to this one.

Drew Carey

Yeah he's here too.

Like I said, this is a pretty lame class other than the headliner.