

Wrestlemania Count-Up – Wrestlemania XXVII: Rocky Can't Save This One

Wrestlemania XXVII

Date: April 3, 2011

Location: Georgia Dome, Atlanta, Georgia

Attendance: 71,617

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler, Josh Matthews

This is the Rock's show as he's back to be guest host. Really that's all you need to know here because it's all that matters. We've also got Cena vs. Miz for the Raw Title, which is basically a backdrop for the obvious Rock and Cena interaction. For the blue guys we've got Del Rio challenging Edge for the title and Undertaker's opponent is Shawn's heterosexual life partner HHH. Oh and there's no MITB this year thank goodness. Let's get to it.

Keri Hilson sings America the Beautiful. I'm not sure who she is but I like her voice far better than Fantasia's from last year.

The opening video sounds like the opening to a late night talk show, but it leads to ROCKY, which makes it all better. He does the long walk down the long ramp to get to the ring and the place goes nuts for him. Rock starts off with the FINALLY line after walking around the ring for a bit. He asks if we can feel, taste and smell the electricity. We get a pretty lame "I say Wrestle, you say Mania" bit with the crowd and Rock has goosebumps.

As for the wrestlers here tonight, there's one in particular sitting in the back trying to decide which Fruity Pebbles shirt to wear to the ring tonight. We get the required Fruity Pebbles chant as Rock keeps stalling. Before continuing, Rock has to have some of the People's Water (his words not mine). Now when he says Yabba, the people say Dabba. If it's not clear by now, he has no idea what to say here for the most part.

Rock lists off all of his own nicknames to say he's hosting while rhyming a bit ("Always defiant and standing taller than Andre the Giant") before saying that IF YA SMELL belongs to the people. Everyone says it with him and that's finally that. This was six minutes long and had about enough material to fill in a third of that.

We get the usual Wrestlemania through history video to show how important it's been over the last 27 years.

Cole, a heel here, says this is the fabric of Americana. That's a bit of a stretch I'd think.

Smackdown World Title: Alberto Del Rio vs. Edge

Del Rio is challenging and comes out in a Rolls Royce. The video screen is made to look like a driveway for Del Rio to be driving from in a cool sight. Also at ringside is Del Rio's bodyguard Brodus Clay. Does anyone even remember that association? Christian is of course here to second Edge. Alberto sends him into the corner to start but Edge comes back with some hard slaps. A backdrop puts Alberto down and a second one puts him on the floor.

Back in and Del Rio grabs an armbar to take over, only to be armdragged down. Alberto goes right back to the arm as Brodus talks trash. Back to the armbar but Del Rio misses a charge and falls out to the floor. Edge dives off the top to take Del Rio down again and we head back inside. The champion heads to the top but Alberto pulls him down with a top rope armdrag for two. Edge comes back with a big boot to get himself a breather but he can't follow up.

A running forearm puts Del Rio down again and a flapjack gets two. Alberto grabs a Codebreaker to the arm but the cross armbreaker is countered into an Edge-0-Matic for two. Del Rio rolls through a rollup and grabs the armbreaker but Edge gets his feet on the ropes to quickly escape. Edge snaps Alberto's neck on the top rope but as he goes up top, Del Rio hits the enziguri in the corner for two.

Brodus and Christian get in a fight on the floor but Del Rio kicks Christian down. There's the Edgecution to set up the spear but it hits

post instead. The armbreaker goes on but Edge keeps his hands together...for a minute before Alberto gets the hold on full. Edge gets on top of Alberto to break it up and there's the Edgecator (modified Sharpshooter) but Del Rio rolls away. Not that it matters as Edge pops up and hits the spear to retain.

Rating: C+. For a world title match at Wrestlemania, this was a disappointment. For Edge's last match because his neck was REALLY messed up, this was pretty decent stuff. Edge would retire a few days later and vacate the title, which says to me that he should have put Del Rio over here. At the end of the day it makes Alberto look weak to lose to a guy that banged up but it did give Edge a good moment to go out on. Nothing great though.

Post match Edge beats up Del Rio's car and Alberto...lets him. Christian provides a pipe and the real beating of the car begins. This had to happen sooner or later. Cole brings up a good point: "Someone should arrest them." True actually, but then again Orton didn't get arrested for trying to blow up John Cena, so this is minor by comparison.

Tough Enough is coming. That show was awesome.

Cole taunts Lawler a bit before their match later.

Cody Rhodes vs. Rey Mysterio

Cody used to be Dashing but then Rey hit him with the 619 and the knee brace hit Cody in the face, scarring him and requiring facial surgery. Cody basically became Dr. Doom but in reality his face was fine. However he wanted Rey's mask for retribution. This was an AWESOME character but of course WWE would wind up wasting the entire thing and make Cody a jobber because they got bored with him after a few months. Still though, this part was awesome.

Oh yeah the match. Rey comes out as Captain America this year which is an awesome looking costume for him. Rey is almost immediately sent to the apron but comes in off the top with a dropkick to take over. A forearm to Rey's face takes over and Cody goes after the knee brace which caused the initial injury. Rey kicks his way out of the corner but Cody headbutts

him in the face to take over again because of the hard mask.

The Disaster Kick to the head puts Rey down again and it's off to a chinlock. Cody charges into a boot in the corner but comes right back with the Alabama Slam for two. Back to the knee brace for a second before Cody hits a running knee to the back of Rey's head to keep him down. Mysterio is sent to the apron again and goes up top, only to be sent down in a delayed superplex. Cody stomps away and talks about how Rey hurt his face.

Rey escapes Cross Rhodes and sends Cody out to the floor for a baseball slide to the face. A headscissors sends Cody into the apron and we head back inside to speed things up. Rey hooks a quick quick rollup for two and fires off a kick to the face. Cody charges into a kick to the ribs but comes back with a release German suplex for two. A springboard headscissors puts Cody down but the 619 is caught in mid kick. Cody slingshots Rey's throat into the middle rope for two more and now the knee brace is removed.

Rey comes right back with a moonsault press for two of his own and Cody loses his mask. The 619 hits and a hard kick to Cody's head gets two more. Now Mysterio puts Cody's mask on and hits a few headbutts with it before hitting a top rope headbutt to the chest for two. Cody rolls to the floor and sneaks in a shot to the face with the knee brace, followed up by Cross Rhodes for the upset pin.

Rating: B-. Good match here and pretty easily Cody's biggest win ever to this point. Cody needed this win a lot more than Mysterio and it made him even more awesome than he already was before this match. Mysterio had nothing to gain here and it was a pleasant sight to see the hotter star go over like that.

We go to the back for our comedy segment of the night. Teddy is in the back with Snoop Dog for a talent search. First up we have William Regal dropping some rhymes on us. Snoop says it's not gangster enough for him. Here are Khali and Beth Phoenix to sing Summer Loving from Grease. It would have been better as Natalya but still not bad. Finally we have Ryder singing Friday (now THERE'S a dated joke), only to be blasted with

a chair by Piper. Snoop is...pleased? Masters does his pec dance to We Will Rock You with Yoshi Tatsu providing vocals. Horny raps and we have a winner. The Bellas come in to dance too.

Corre vs. Big Show/Kane/Kofi Kingston/Santino Marella

Corre is the sequel to Nexus and is made up of Barrett/Slater/Gabriel/Jackson. Barrett is IC Champion and Slater/Gabriel are tag champions. Santino and Slater start things off but after a quick hiptoss from Marella here's Big Show. Matthews: "He's certainly not unorthodox." Yeah actually he is, given how big he is. Everything breaks down and Kofi kicks Barrett's head off. In all the calamity, Santino Cobras Slater into the WMD for the pin in just over 90 seconds. This would be the replacement for MITB for the Mania payday.

Rock kind of hits on Eve Torres in the back. But enough of that as Rock says he can make magic with anyone that comes around the corner. I called this one before it happened live: Mae Young pops up and says she wants the People's Strudel. Rock suggests the Moses variety instead and makes various other old people jokes. Mae smack's Rock's pants and leaves so Rock can say he wishes that was ANYONE else.

He turns around and locks eyes with Steve Austin. They look at each other and say it's good to see each other with Rock asking if Austin remembers. Austin says he does and they shake hands. This wasn't a funny moment but one of those where you could actually feel the intensity. Also to brag a bit, I called both of those appearances before they happened live.

We recap Randy Orton vs. CM Punk. Back in 2008, Orton cost Punk the title for no apparent reason by keeping him out of the Championship Scramble at Unforgiven. Two and a half years later, Punk jumped Orton and said he was doing this as revenge for Orton costing him that shot. Punk had since taken over the Nexus and sent them after Orton, who took them out one by one in a few weeks (Note that Cena spent six months fighting them and took out one guy while Orton took out about five in as many weeks). Tonight is the showdown.

Randy Orton vs. CM Punk

The cylinder from last year is now a cube which still has the videos playing on them. Orton immediately takes it to the floor and pounds away, but Punk jumps over the steps and kicks them into Orton's knees. Back in and Orton stays on the knees for a quick two count. Punk of course mocks the knee injury before stomping at the legs even more. Randy grabs a quick backbreaker but Punk comes back with a kind of Stunner to the leg for two.

Punk hits the running knee in the corner but Orton falls down before he can hit the bulldog. The straightedge one stays on the knee and puts Orton in the Tree of Woe. In a cool bit, Orton tries to pull himself up but Punk drops a top rope knee to take Randy right back down. The GTS is countered but Punk breaks up the RKO with a high kick for two. Punk loads up the Macho Elbow but Orton crotches him down instead. A superplex puts Punk down but the cover is very delayed and only gets two.

Punk wraps the knee around the post a few times and Orton is in big trouble. Off to a modified Indian deathlock for a bit but Orton fights back and slugs Punk down to take over. Punk comes back with a basic kick to the knee and there's the Anaconda Vice. Orton rolls over and the fans never once seemed nervous about a tap out. CM heads out to the apron and is rammed into the post, followed by the Elevated DDT. Orton loads up the Punt but the knee gives out. Punk heads to the outside and loads up the springboard clothesline but dives right into the RKO for the pin by Randy.

Rating: B. Good solid match here which should have been the end of the feud, but since this is WWE, there was a gimmick rematch the next month because that's how WWE books feuds. You know, because WRESTLEMANIA isn't good enough to end a story at. Anyway, very good match here between two guys with solid chemistry together.

The Rock and Gene Okerlund are in the back and they meet John Cena's #1 fan: Pee Wee Herman. He's not my kind of comedy but Rock recruits him to Team Bring It. Gene calls Herman a tool.

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Hall of Fame time. The class of 2011: Abdullah the Butcher, Sunny, Road

Warriors, Drew Carey, Bob Armstrong, Jim Duggan (with bowtie on the 2x4) and.....that Shawn Michaels guy.

Here's a Wrestlemania Recall from....Monday night? It's Lawler and Swagger, Cole's trainer for his match tonight, brawling.

We don't bother recapping Cole vs. Lawler, but basically Cole has been heel since November and even cost Jerry the WWE Title a few months ago. After months and months, tonight is Lawler's revenge. Swagger has been training Cole and Austin is guest referee. Booker and JR come out to do commentary with Josh.

Cole comes out in a Syracuse hoodie and headgear to match. He makes fun of JR for being fat and Lawler for having a big ego. This is going to be Lawler's first Wrestlemania match.

Jerry Lawler vs. Michael Cole

Austin rides out on his ATV and sends Cole into his plastic cube. Cole warms up in his cube as Lawler and Austin wait in the ring. Austin rings the bell and Lawler goes right for Michael. He has to punch Swagger out first and sends him into the barricade for good measure. Cole begs for mercy and reaches his hand through the hole in the cube for a handshake, only to be pulled face first into the wall. Lawler climbs in and pounds away before bringing Cole out into the open.

Swagger interferes again and Cole gets a breather before actually hitting a baseball slide. Jack puts on the ankle lock as Cole is in control here. Back in and Michael works on the ankle some more as he's actually maintaining control. Cole loads up a Vader Bomb but can only do it off the bottom rope for two. It's remarkable that a former world champion is in this much trouble after a few shots by an announcer isn't it?

Cole starts going after the ankle again as we're somehow EIGHT MINUTES into this. The crowd chants boring and they're absolutely right. Cole takes down a strap and puts on the An-Cole (yes that's what it's called) Lock but Lawler easily breaks it. After nine minutes plus, Jerry FINALLY comes back and starts pounding away. Swagger throws in a towel but Austin wipes his head with it and throws it back. Jack gets in the ring and is

Stunned for his efforts.

Now Cole gets in Austin's face but walks into a right hand from Jerry as the real beating begins. There's a dropkick for good measure to put Cole down and it's time for the middle rope punch, complete with a point to the sign and the peeling down of the strap. Jerry covers him but pulls it up at two. Lawler puts on the ankle lock and Cole immediately tabs. Austin asks if he gives up veeeeeeeeery slowly. Cole: "YES YES I GIVE UP I GIVE UP!" Austin: "ARE YOU SURE!" The bell finally rings and we're done.

Rating: D-. Oh this was terrible. This ran THIRTEEN AND A HALF MINUTES with Lawler getting beaten up for nearly ten of that. This should have been five minutes long with Lawler not even breaking a sweat. I can live with the lack of a piledriver for company rules, but the fist should have ended it rather than the ankle lock. At least it couldn't get worse though.

Swagger carries Cole out and it's time to drink. Booker comes in for no apparent reason and Lawler (a notorious non-drinker) has a chance to drop his beers. We get a Spinarooni and Booker gets a Stunner for stealing the spotlight.

And then it happens.

We get an e-mail from the Anonymous Raw GM, saying that since Austin got physical, the decision is reversed and Cole wins by DQ. If there has EVER been a dumber idea in wrestling history, I have no idea what it is. Lawler would get the win TWO MONTHS LATER and the GM would eventually be revealed to be Hornswoggle of all people. This is just so stupid. Austin gives Josh, the messenger, the Stunner for good measure. Also to keep the people from booing this out of the building anymore than they already are.

We get a video on Wrestlemania week.

We recap HHH Undertaker. In short, Shawn couldn't do it the last two years, so now it's HHH's turn to try. Both guys talked about how big this was and how awesome they were and it's no holds barred for no real

apparent reason.

HHH vs. Undertaker

HHH comes out with a phalanx of soldiers, in battle gear and to a LONG version of For Whom the Bell Tolls by Metallica. Does it make up for the Thor entrance? No, but it's pretty awesome. Taker comes out to Ain't No Grave Can Hold My Body Down (or whatever its name is) by Johnny Cash. HHH pounds him into the corner to start but gets launched over the top rope for his efforts. The Game fires off more right hands but gets sent into the steps to break the momentum again.

HHH comes back by spearing him into the Cole Mine (JR and King are doing commentary now) but Taker sits up with ease. Back in and Taker hits the jumping clothesline but Old School is countered. A clothesline puts Taker onto the floor and HHH whips him into the barricade for good measure. HHH loads up the announce table but the Pedigree attempt is countered by a backdrop to the floor.

Taker goes back inside and busts out the Taker Dive for good measure. Thankfully this time he had HHH there to catch him. The steps are placed in front of the other table and Taker charges at HHH, only to be caught in the spinebuster through the table to put both guys down again. Back in and HHH walks into a chokeslam for a close two. HHH drives Taker into the corner and starts pounding away, only to get caught in the Last Ride ala Wrestlemania 17. He escapes this time though, only to have his Pedigree attempt countered. Snake Eyes connects but the big boot is countered into another spinebuster.

HHH brings in a chair but gets kicked in the face to give Taker the chair. The Game absorbs a shot to the back and grabs a quick Pedigree for two. Triple H pounds away in the corner again and now the Last Ride connects for two. The Tombstone also hits for two and Taker is getting frustrated. As he picks up HHH, the Game comes back with a DDT onto the chair for no cover. Both guys slowly fight to their feet and there's another Pedigree and a VERY slow count for two.

A third Pedigree hits and the crowd is barely popping anymore on these kickouts as we're reaching the point of ridiculousness. HHH blasts him in

the back with the chair eight times but he's too gassed to follow up. A ninth cracks Undertaker in the head and the Dead Man is in trouble. There are about 45 seconds of nothing in between these shots by the way. Taker can't sit up so HHH yells at him to stay down. A chokeslam attempt is easily shrugged off but Taker gets to his feet in the corner.

HHH tombstones Undertaker but even with the tongue out it only gets two. Again, if your name isn't Kane, THAT DOESN'T WORK. HHH goes to the floor and gets the sledgehammer but walks into the Hell's Gate. He drops the hammer but the hold is locked on tight. HHH starts to pass out but gets the hammer again. Then he drops it again and HHH taps out to make Undertaker 19-0.

Rating: B. I'm pretty sure that's what I gave it live and it barely holds up to that level now. At the end of the day, this was treated like a match where Taker was beaten down so much that he couldn't possibly come back. The problem with the match is exactly that: it only felt like a match designed to be as one sided as possible for him to make the comeback. Think of it like the Aristocrats joke: take it as far as you can go and then get to the surprise ending. As mentioned, the fans didn't even react to the near falls by the end. It also didn't feel natural at all, much like the two Shawn matches. Good, but definitely not great.

Taker is carted out, which was the inspiration for the rematch, as HHH made it sound like he won the match.

Wrestlemania next year is in Miami.

John Morrison/Snooki/Trish Stratus vs. Laycool/Dolph Ziggler

Barely any story here as it's just there to give us Snooki, which is supposed to mean something. Vickie is with Laycool here because she's already screwing Dolph at this point. Trish is STUNNING as a brunette here too. Laycool attacks to start and the guys get involved as well. Michelle shoves Layla to start so Trish comes in and beats Michelle up. The Matrish is broken up with a stomp but Trish escapes the Faithbreaker (Styles Clash) with a facebuster.

Michelle and Stratus slug it out on the top before falling to the floor

at the same time. Layla tries to interfere and gets decked as well, only to have Trish dive off the apron and take both of them out. The Chick Kick gets two on Michelle as the guys come in sans tags. Starship Pain to the floor takes Ziggy out and there's the tag to Snooki for a handspring elbow to Michelle. That and a splash are good for the pin.

Rating: D+. Trish and Laycool looked hot, Snooki did her two moves decently enough, the guys did almost nothing at all and Vickie was kept to a minimum in the less than three and a half minutes this ran. For a match that short with Trish looking that good, how much can you really complain here? Laycool would be split in a month with Michelle leaving the company.

The new attendance record is 71,617. Woot.

Do you need a recap of Cena vs. Miz? Miz is champion and it's Cena at Wrestlemania.

Anyway we do get a video of Miz's rise from MTV to Wrestlemania main event, cut in with great Wrestlemania moments. I'll give them this: Miz's rise from total joke to what he became is nothing short of remarkable. How Cena got the shot isn't even mentioned here. I think he won the Chamber match.

Raw World Title: John Cena vs. The Miz

Miz, complete with the SWEET coat, comes out through a set of balloons spelling out the word AWESOME. Oh and Alex Riley is here too. Cena has a full on gospel choir to sing him to the ring. That's rather awesome. We get a prayer set to a Cena career video. If nothing else, this lets us see a gospel choir singing "Your time is up, my time is now." It gets booted out of the building, but it does exist.

Feeling out process to start with Miz being taken down by a headlock. Miz grabs a headlock of his own but gets thrown down yet again. A test of strength is teased but Cena grabs another headlock instead. Not much to see yet. Miz fights into the corner and stomps away before hitting the corner clothesline for two. Matt Hardy's Side Effect gets two more as we're firmly in first gear here. Another corner clothesline misses and

Cena comes back with a regular clothesline for two.

A big boot to the head gets two for Miz as the crowd continues to be dead silent for this. Cena misses a...cross body I think and falls to the apron. A Million Dollar Kneelift gets two for the champion but the Skull Crushing Finale is reversed and Cena fires off the shoulder blocks. The finishing sequence continues but Miz escapes the AA into a low DDT for two. Miz escapes the STF and hits the Reality Check for two more. The champion removes a buckle pad and as the referee puts it back on, Cena gets an unseen small package for two.

Another AA attempt is blocked with Miz grabbing the top rope. Instead it's the STF but Miz quickly gets to the rope. Riley gets on the apron and the distraction is enough to send Cena into the buckle (apparently the referee is a bad repairman) and the Skull Crushing Finale gets two. Another Finale is reversed and the referee is bumped. The AA (ZERO pop) hits but there's no one to count. Riley comes in with a briefcase shot to the head which gets another two on Cena.

Alex tries to come in again but Miz's case shot takes him out by mistake. A BIG release AA hits again but Miz kicks out at two. They head outside and Cena clotheslines Miz over the barricade into the timekeeper's area. Miz tries to get up and Cena spears him down, sending Miz's head HARD into the concrete. I've heard Miz say that gave him a concussion and as a result he doesn't remember a thing about this match. It looked TERRIBLE too, and it actually ends the match, as in the MAIN EVENT OF WRESTLEMANIA, in a double countout.

Rating: D-. The second half of this match got WAY better than the first, but the problem is it's a fifteen minute match and the first seven or so are ridiculously boring. On top of that, did I mention it was a DOUBLE COUNTOUT IN THE MAIN EVENT OF WRESTLEMANIA??? The only good thing here was Miz kicking out of the AA in the middle of the ring. That's how you make a guy look good. The rest of the match however is how you make someone look HORRIBLE, much like the match. Terrible stuff here as Miz wasn't ready for this, which is what almost everyone thought would happen.

Oh wait here's Rock, who apparently has match making powers as host (why he didn't change the Lawler/Cole match earlier is anyone's guess). After ignoring another e-mail, he restarts this under No DQ rules. The bell rings, Cena can't hit the AA, Rock hits the Rock Bottom on Cena, Miz retains.

Post match Rock beats up Miz to a very limited reaction and it's the People's Elbow to end the show.

Overall Rating: D. Back in 2011 when I first watched this, I said out loud "What did I just watch?" That's the same thing I'm wondering now, because this was terrible. Taker vs. HHH and Orton vs. Punk are both solid matches, but other than that this might as well have been Over the Limit instead of Wrestlemania. Basically this was there to set up the next edition of the show, which is pretty much a big screw you to the fans. Nothing to see here other than MAYBE HHH vs. Undertaker, but other than that there's nothing of quality going on. One interesting note though: this is the only Mania ever with no title changes.

Ratings Comparison

Edge vs. Alberto Del Rio

Original: C+

Redo: C+

Cody Rhodes vs. Rey Mysterio

Original: B

Redo: B-

Corre vs. Kane/Santino Marella/Kofi Kingston/Big Show

Original: N/A

Redo: N/A

CM Punk vs. Randy Orton

Original: B-

Redo: B

Michael Cole vs. Jerry Lawler

Original: C

Redo: D-

Undertaker vs. HHH

Original: B

Redo: B

Snooki/Trish Stratus/John Morrison vs. Dolph Ziggler/Laycool

Original: N/A

Redo: D+

Miz vs. John Cena

Original: C-

Redo: D-

Overall Rating

Original: C-

Redo: D

Oh man was I too nice to this show back in the day.

Here's the original review if you're interested:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/04/03/wrestlemania-27-not-sure-on-this-one/>

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