

On This Day: April 21, 2008 – Monday Night Raw 2008: King Me

Monday Night Raw

Date: April 21, 2008

Location: BI-L0 Center, Greenville, South Carolina

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

This is another request and since it's taking forever to download some TNA shows, I figured I might as well knock some of these off in the meantime. This is the King of the Ring tournament so it's a three hour special. Almost everything you have here is a tournament match, plus an eight man tag and a REALLY stupid other match. Let's get to it.

Theme song gets us going. It's still Papa Roach.

We open with Lillian telling us that the tournament is back tonight.

King of the Ring First Round: Chris Jericho vs. MVP

Jericho is IC Champion and MVP is US Champion. There's no bracket yet and even JR and Lawler haven't seen them. I don't mind a champion losing so much here as one of them gets to look stronger. This is also the go home show for Backlash, which is a show I haven't done yet. MVP takes him to the mat to start but Jericho comes back with some knees to the head and a kick to the same area.

MVP punches him in the corner as this is off to a hot start. Jericho drapes him over the top rope and mostly misses a baseball slide to the floor. MVP catches him coming back in with a knee lift and a kind of clothesline for two. He hooks kind of a modified abdominal stretch on the mat but Jericho

gets up pretty quickly. Overhead belly to belly puts Jericho down for two. They do the Flair bridge up into a backslide spot which gets a good reaction in Horsemen country. Big boot gets two for MVP. Jericho comes back with a clothesline but the Lionsault misses. Play of the Day is countered into the Walls and Jericho advances.

Rating: C. Very basic match here but with a one night tournament you have to keep things that way. Again I don't mind MVP losing clean here because it was to another champion and on top of that he would drop the title on Sunday anyway. Not much to see here but it was fine all things considered.

Jericho sits on the throne post match.

King of the Ring First Round: CM Punk vs. Matt Hardy

Punk has the MITB case. Feeling out process to start but it turns into a strike off, won by Punk. He takes Matt down for two and hooks a quick chinlock. Matt comes back with some headbutts and drives an elbow into Punk's back off the middle rope. Matt's bulldog is countered into the clothesline and bulldog out of the corner for two. Punk's springboard clothesline is caught in the Side Effect for two. Twist of Fate is countered into a GTS which is countered into a sunset flip which is countered by Punk sitting on Hardy for the pin. Nice ending.

Rating: C+. Another short match here but this one was a little more fun than the previous one. The ending was pretty quick and that's a good thing as it was certainly entertaining for a four minute match. Punk was on a roll at this point and he would win the world title in about two months. Matt would get the US Title on Sunday.

All we have as far as a bracket is Jericho vs. Punk in the semi-finals.

Tonight it's Barack Obama vs. Hilary Clinton. That's the

really stupid match I warned you about. We see it in Smackdown vs. Raw 2008 for a preview.

We get a clip from Raw last week of HHH vs. JBL when Orton ran in and HHH got double teamed. The fatal fourway on Sunday (those three plus Cena) is now an elimination match.

JBL says this Sunday he'll take his place on top of the WWE. He was in the New York Times today.

King of the Ring First Round: Finlay vs. Great Khali

Khali is having issues with Big Show around this time. Horny is at ringside of course. Finlay charges at Khali but gets shoved down almost immediately. Khali shoves him down but misses a legdrop. Finlay pounds away but Khali shrugs him off and sends him to the corner. Horny comes in with the club but Finlay saves him. The chop puts Finlay down and Khali wraps Finlay's leg around the post....for a DQ? Apparently so. Too short to rate but this was nothing of note.

Big Show comes out but Khali won't go for him until Sunday.

Finlay is helped out because of the knee attack.

King of the Ring First Round: William Regal vs. Hornswoggle

Twenty seconds, Regal Stretch. Finlay comes in to help but Regal beats him down and attacks the knee. Regal is GM at this point so shenanigans seem to be up.

The brackets are set for the semi-finals:

Jericho

Punk

Finlay

Regal

Video on the annual post Wrestlemania European tour.

Here's Shawn for a little chat. Apparently Batista isn't happy about Shawn retiring Flair at Wrestlemania so Shawn wants to talk about it right now. They have a match on Sunday with Jericho as referee for no apparent reason, although it would set up a six month feud between Shawn and Jericho. Here's Batista and Shawn if Batista wanted to face Flair at Mania, which is what Jericho suggested on Smackdown.

Batista asks if that would make Shawn feel better. This isn't about Flair anymore, but rather about Big Dave and Shawn. He respects where Shawn is, but not how he got there. He'll finish this with Shawn at Backlash. Shawn appreciates the honesty but he's everything Batista says he is. Whether Dave likes it or not, Shawn is Mr. Wrestlemania and there definitely is blood on his hands. Batista is going to need luck on Sunday. Shawn goes to leave but Batista spins him back around. Shawn gets into superkick position but Batista just walks past him and leaves.

Hilary Clinton gives the kind of promo/speech that a famous person gives when they talk to a wrestling audience that they don't understand. This one isn't terrible though as she mainly talks about how she'll fight for America and lists some of her issues. It's very corny, but I'll give them points for at least talking like this. Obama and McCain will talk later.

Hardcore Holly vs. Carlito

Just...why? Oh this is something to do with the tag titles. Holly and Rhodes are champions coming into this. Carlito has his partner Santino with him. Feeling out process to start with Holly mainly in control. Carlito comes back with a backbreaker for two. Off to a chinlock which doesn't last long. Carlito works on the back some more but misses a charge. Holly makes his comeback with clotheslines and the dropkick but his back gives out. He loads up the Alabama Slam but his back gives out again. Backstabber gets the pin.

Rating: D. This wasn't much. This would presumably set up the match on Sunday but it didn't happen for some reason. Then again, no one cared at all about the tag titles so it's not like anyone cared. This was really just a breather to allow everyone to transition from the first half of the show to the second.

HHH says he'll win.

King of the Ring Semi-Finals: Chris Jericho vs. CM Punk

Both guys are tentative to start but both get quick twos. The first big move is Jericho draping him over the top rope out of a suplex. Punk tries a springboard but Jericho kicks his legs out and Punk is in trouble. Jericho tries a hammerlock but Punk takes his head off with a clothesline for two. They trade rollups like at the end of Punk's other match but no one gets a pin. Walls are countered into a rollup for two.

Jericho hits an enziguri for two and this is getting good. Punk snaps off a powerslam for two. GTS is countered into the bulldog and Jericho loads up the Lionsault. It looks strange as Jericho tried to land on all fours because Punk had his knees up. Either way he stopped himself and hooks the Walls but Punk makes a rope. Jericho goes up but Punk high kicks him down. He puts Jericho on his shoulders and the GTS sends Punk to the finals clean.

Rating: B-. These two always work well together and this was no exception. Punk got a win here which made him look a lot stronger, which is what someone like Jericho is great at. Even four years later Jericho is still putting people over but it still means something, which is a great sign for a veteran like him.

Senator Obama gives a very corny speech, concluding with "do you smell what the Barack is cooking." Just...no.

King of the Ring Semi-Finals: William Regal vs. Finlay

Finlay has the bad knee coming in. Regal circles him to start but gets monkey flipped to the floor. Regal sends him into the steps and he hits knee first. Back in the ring and it's time for a slugout. Regal goes shoulder first into the post for two. Finlay tries a fireman's carry but the knee gives out. Back to the forearms and a rollup gets two. Regal hits him in the head with a knee and puts on the Regal Stretch. Finlay passes out to send Regal to the finals.

Rating: C. These two always have good matches as they're always physical. The more I see of Finlay the more I appreciate him as he was really good at stuff like this. There was nothing for him to lose out there and he was going to be adequate at worst no matter who you put him out there with. Good stuff but short.

McCain uses a lot of wrestling lines and says go vote.

We run down the card for Backlash.

Cena says that you've heard everyone talk tonight and he has as good a chance as anyone else, but the advantage he has is he doesn't have to go through himself.

Let's get this over with.

Hilary Clinton vs. Barack Obama

There's a Bill impersonator with Hilary, who comes out to Real American. No one reacts AT ALL. Obama comes out to Rock's theme and I guess is the face in this. They're impersonators in case you didn't get that. It's so weird seeing and hearing people not care at all about Hogan's music. I mean there's NOTHING. This is one of those times I feel ashamed about being a wrestling fan. They both cut promos on each other and Hilary's is far better, as she's played by a chick from SHIMMER. The fans still don't care.

Is this supposed to be funny? Are we supposed to be this

stupid to find this entertaining? Rock's theme gets ZERO reaction either and Obama has huge ears. King gets the only funny line of this by saying that if Obama were facing Mike Tyson in this it would be a buffet. They have a "match" which isn't completely terrible as both are played by wrestlers. Obama hits a Rock Bottom but Bill breaks up the People's Elbow. Cue Umaga for a Spike to Obama and a Samoan Drop to Hilary. Bill runs away. This got TEN MINUTES.

Here are a bunch of face Divas to introduce the new Women's Champion Mickie James. She beat Beth who was considered unbeatable so it was a big upset. It still amazes me how much more interesting the Divas were just a few years ago. Mickie thanks the other girls but gets cut off by Beth and some other evil girls. Remember when there were twelve Divas that could be in one segment and could all have at least a passable match? Beth says it's not if she'll win the title back, but when she'll win it back. Michelle slaps Beth and the brawl is on.

Mr. Kennedy is coming back.

King of the Ring Finals: William Regal vs. CM Punk

Punk comes in with bad ribs because of the matches earlier. Regal is basically in his second match after the Horny match and beating an injured Finlay. Punk starts off fast with some kicks in the corner. He tries the bulldog but gets suplexed down and it's off to a bow and arrow hold. Punk fights up from that and hits a spinning kick to the knee.

Regal grabs the arms and forces him right back down to the mat as is his custom. The idea is that it's strikes vs. grapples which is about as natural as you're going to get with these two. Punk fights up again and hits a BIG kick to the head to stagger Regal. Spinning backfist sets up the high kick for two. That sounded great. Punk loads up the GTS but Regal grabs the rope. He escapes and hits the knee trembler, followed by

the Stretch. Punk hangs on for almost thirty seconds but finally has to tap to give Regal the tournament.

Rating: C-. This was too short to mean much but it gave Regal some more psychosis to work with which was a really entertaining time. Then it just stopped cold because it was getting too good and that's how WWE works. Punk giving up because of the rib injury is ok because Regal didn't win fairly (coming in at a big advantage), which is fine.

Regal's psycho look while he sits on the throne is still great.

Here's Orton for the main event but first he brags about how awesome he is and how his title reign will continue after Sunday.

Randy Orton/Edge/Chavo Guerrero/John Bradshaw Layfield vs. John Cena/HHH/Kane/The Undertaker

Orton is Raw champion, Edge is challenging Taker on Sunday, Chavo is challenging Kane, JBL is challenging Orton, Cena is challenging Orton, HHH is challenging Orton, Kane is ECW Champion, Undertaker is Smackdown champion. Now that's a packed main event. How out of place does Chavo look here though? After the entrances take forever to get through we're ready to go. Seriously, there were ten minutes spent on entrances PLUS a commercial. That's ridiculous.

Taker and Orton look to start but Edge jumps Taker in a surprise. This goes badly for the Canadian as a big clothesline puts him down. Old School hits (hasn't that been called old longer than it wasn't called old?) and we take a break after 40 seconds. Back with Chavo tagging Edge in to work over a downed HHH. The spear is countered into a spinebuster and there's the tag to Cena.

He starts his finishing sequence very quickly on Edge but Chavo low bridges him on the Shuffle attempt. JBL throws him

back in clean which shocks Jerry. Off to Orton who does nothing so it's JBL again. Russian legsweep gets two as does a clothesline. Edge comes in and the Cena chants begin. Edge gets a big boot and it's off to Orton for a chinlock. Cena stands up but it's a double clothesline and both guys are down.

The tags are made to Chavo and Kane with the Big Bald cleaning house. All of the evil team goes down and a side slam puts Chavo down. The top rope clothesline mostly gets shoulder and everything breaks down. Chavo counters a slam attempt into a DDT but as he goes for the Frog Splash Kane chokeslams him down. Out of nowhere though Edge spears Kane for the pin.

Rating: C. It's a main event tag match and that's about it. They covered almost everything and they had the most secure winner at the PPV (Kane) take the fall which is a good thing. Not a bad match but it's just a way to throw everyone into the main event at once, which is fine for building up the PPV main events.

Edge takes an FU post match, HHH takes the Clothesline, RK0 to HHH and a double chokeslam to JBL and Orton. Undertaker stands tall to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. This was a really entertaining show that went by fast. I'd have liked to see some better wrestling in there but the matches had to be fast due to the tournament. I'm glad they didn't go to any double eliminations as in an eight man tournament that's kind of excessive. Good show though and I want to watch Backlash now so that's a great sign. Good stuff.

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