

On This Day: April 23, 2007 – Monday Night Raw 2007: Cena's Birthday Present

Monday Night Raw

Date: April 23, 2007

Location: Earl's Court, London, England

Attendance: 12,000

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

This is back in England and it's being reviewed for one reason: this is the Cena vs. Michaels hour long match which is more or less the match where Cena proved that he was in fact not human. Other than iron man matches, I think this would be the longest match in modern company history unless I'm overlooking it and it's nearly 5am so I probably am. Let's get to it.

Here's Shane to open things up. He says that he's here for a fight but not with Lashley due to what happened last week. We get a video of the Milan Miracle, where a "fan" named Santino Marella came in for an IC Title match with Umaga and won the title with a little help from Lashley. This is fallout from Mania where Lashley beat Umaga and caused Vince to lose his hair.

Shane talks about how a fan is going to get a chance to face a dragon, just like St. George since it's St. George's Day. It'll be a No DQ match. The manager of Chelsea Football Club is here but it won't be him. Shane brings out Robbie Brookside who was a pretty big deal, teaming with Regal for years and competing in Japan as well. He had a cup of coffee on Nitro as well I think. Regal has said that without Brookside there wouldn't be a William Regal, a Finlay, a Wade Barrett or a Sheamus so take that for what it's worth.

Robbie Brookside vs. Shane McMahon

This is No DQ. Shane takes him down with a headlock and works on the back with elbows. Total squash so far as Shane knocks Brookside down in the corner. Shane sets up the Coast to Coast and drives the garbage can into Robbie's head. Robbie is out cold so Shane says this is a handicap match and brings out Umaga to be his partner. Umaga hits the running hip attack and a top rope splash but Shane brings out Vince to make it 3-1. Apparently this is the go home show for Backlash which is a show I haven't done yet. Vince is in a suit and hat but he gets the pin.

Rating: D. The idea makes sense but there's no entertainment value to it for the most part. Shane is always cool to see and further emphasizes how bad Garrett Bischoff is but there wasn't any interest here. Brookside took a beating which was expected but the fans didn't really seem to care about him.

We get a clip from Wrestlemania where Cena beat Shawn. That means it's time for a rematch on Raw three weeks later right? Tonight's match is non-title.

Matt Hardy vs. Trevor Murdoch

The Hardys are Raw tag champions. Todd Grisham is doing ring announcing for no apparent reason. Murdoch takes him into the corner easily and throws on a headlock. Matt comes back with a fist drop for two. He goes up but gets pulled off the middle rope as Murdoch takes over again. Off to a sleeper but Matt breaks it up and hits a forearm. Side Effect gets two. A middle rope Fameasser gets two and Cade pops up on the apron for a distraction. Murdoch hits what was supposed to be a Canadian Destroyer for the pin.

Rating: D. This didn't click at all. Jeff was at ringside but didn't do a thing at all. There wasn't much to see here as it was a short match on top of being bad. Murdoch was pretty good at times but at other times he was your old Texas cowboy kind

of guy which isn't interesting a lot of the time. Bad match.

Video on the Condemned.

Melina vs. Maria

Both girls are looking GOOD here. Melina is Women's Champion but it's not on the line. Grisham talks very slowly. Melina beats her up and after the quick comeback from Maria, a facejam ends this. It's amazing how much better looking these girls are than the current crop of Divas.

Carlito is getting ready in the back and Flair says let's go. This was a mentor/mentee thing.

Carlito vs. Great Khali

Carlito comes out alone, minute Flair or girlfriend Torrie. He tries to speed things up but gets run over by a Khali shoulder block. Carlito tries the legs and then the eyes. He goes up top but his missile dropkick misses. Chop, Plunge, pin.

Flair comes out post match and Carlito yells at him in Spanish. Naitch leaves in a huff.

Mick Foley talks about a Make-A-Wish kid that made the main event for Backlash which was a fatal fourway. One of the four is Edge who pops up and says he'll win on Sunday.

Another video on the Condemned.

Shawn runs into Cena and nothing of note is said.

Shawn Michaels vs. John Cena

There's almost an hour to go in the show so you know this is going to be something good. Shawn works on the shoulder to start but Cena counters with a headscissors into a stalemate. They do the exact same sequence and then try it again, but Cena goes for a drop toehold which Shawn escapes. Another STFU attempt sends Shawn running to the ropes. Cena is very pleased

that he got that close.

Cena tries to grab the leg this time but Shawn makes the rope. They get in each others' faces and it's a slugout. Back from a break and the fans are getting way into this. Cena takes him down with a headlock instead which lasts for a good while. A big clothesline takes Shawn down and it's chinlock time. Shawn pops back up and is immediately clotheslined back down.

Sweet Chin Music is avoided and the FU is countered by Shawn heading to the floor. We take another break and come back to Shawn getting in a shot in the corner. He's mostly the heel in this but it's not full fledged. They speed things up and Cena hits a World's Strongest Slam for two. Release fisherman's suplex gets two. Throwback gets two. They slug it out and Shawn counters a suplex into a neckbreaker for two.

Another slugout results in the flying forearm by Shawn. He nips up and hammers Cena down and goes to the corner for the elbow. It hits but instead of covering Shawn stomps the mat for the Chin Music. Cena ducks and Shawn grabs a quick backslide for two. The shoulder block misses and Cena may have hurt his shoulder on the crash to the floor. Shawn dives over the floor but Cena catches him in mid-air and slams him into the steps.

Back from break #3 and they're both in the ring again. It should be noted that we're probably half an hour into this and Cena looks FINE. He doesn't look tired, he doesn't look winded, he doesn't even look sweaty. That's almost scary. Cena charges into the post and Shawn has a target. He hooks a combination hammerlock/abdominal stretch on the mat before driving in some knees on the arm.

Cena shrugs off most of it and starts his finishing sequence, taking Shawn's head off with a clothesline. The Shuffle hits but the FU is countered into Chin Music attempt into the FU for a VERY close two. We take another break and come back with

Cena throwing Shawn to the floor. Cena rams his back into the post and we head back inside. Delayed vertical suplex gets two.

Bearhug time which is proof we're in a big match as you almost never see a face use one of those. Shawn fights out of it but gets thrown over the corner and out to the floor. Back in Cena hits the top rope Fameasser which seems to be a new move for him. They go to the corner for a superplex but Cena instead tries an FU off the top, which Shawn counters into a powerbomb off the top to put both guys down.

Out to the apron and Shawn knocks him face first into the announce table. The look on his face says THAT REALLY HURT! Out to the floor and Shawn loads up a piledriver on the steps but Cena backdrops him onto the floor as we take I think break number five. Back with them on the announce table and Cena is all fired up. Back inside Cena hooks the STFU but it's not cranked on perfectly.

Shawn makes the rope and we cut to some cheering girl in the crowd. Shawn looks a bit dead but Cena is waiting for the FU. Shawn pops up with the Chin Music but Cena tries the FU again. That gets reversed and Chin Music hits for a very delayed two. They slowly get up and Cena tries the FU again but Shawn slips down the back and hits the second Sweet Chin Music for the pin at 55:49. Unless there's some house show match that I don't know of, that's the longest regular one on one match in the WWE/F since 1981.

Rating: A-. It's certainly not a masterpiece or even anything close to one, but considering they just went an hour, you have to give them bonus points. Cena looked fresh as a daisy 40 minutes into this which is more proof that he isn't human. This is also a loss that doesn't hurt Cena because it wasn't like he got beat but rather that he got caught. Very good match and the time aspect of it is remarkable. This match is on the Heartbreak and Triumph DVD.

Shawn puts the title on Cena's chest post match and crotch chops him to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. To say that this is a one match show is an understatement but when it's a great match like this on free TV, you can't complain at all. Good stuff here and while it didn't really build up Backlash that well, it's still great with one match that is the first of its kind in over twenty five years.

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