

More On HHH/Curtis Axel

So this was kind of a big deal but I didn't have the chance to really talk about it in detail. It's now two days later so here are some more thoughts on it. I'm still very much the same on it as I was before: I love the idea of pushing Axel, but I can't stand the way they ended the show.

McGillicutty had been a guy who clearly had skill and looked very poised in the ring but he never got a chance to shine on his own. The biggest reason of all was his stupid name: Michael McGillicutty. I don't know if you're a fan of the show I Love Lucy, but Lucy's maiden name was McGillicuddy, which is the first thing that comes to my mind whenever I heard Axel's old name. The name sounds like a low level dinner theater actor, not the name of a talented wrestler. Again I'm not sure why they can't just call him Joe Hennig, but I'm sure it's some high concept idea that doesn't make sense once you think about it for more than two minutes.

The idea of putting him with Heyman is a great move, especially given the amount of success Heyman has had lately. Heyman putting his seal of approval on you is usually a good sign (Heidenreich aside) and it's hard to argue against the theory that putting someone with Heyman is going to mean success for them. Axel has the look, the skills, the poise, and everything else that he needs to win. It was a good debut for the character and all that jazz. Good move here.

Then we get to the problem.

The second HHH's music hit, he became the focus of the whole thing. Axel stopped mattering, with HHH even saying move away so the adults can talk. What's even worse is that Axel actually did step away as Heyman and HHH talked in the middle of the ring. Then HHH slaps him in the face and Axel....does nothing. He falls down and just sits there as HHH smirks and says that they're having a match later tonight. Again, it's all about HHH and Axel is just some new guy for him to beat up later in the night.

Then we get to the match and HHH beats up Axel like he's any other guy. He stomps Axel into the corner and then pounds on him outside as well. Axel comes back in and gets in some shots to the jaw, but they're nothing special: a dropkick, a middle rope punch and that's about it. HHH comes back, hits two of his signature moves (facebuster and spinebuster) and knocks Axel to the floor. They start to head back in, HHH can't get back in, the show ends with the focus entirely on HHH.

Based on what we saw, Axel was either completely destroyed after about five minutes of action with him being in control for about two of those minutes, or he's just too nice a guy to follow up on HHH. The idea of the match was that HHH was so banged up from his match with Brock that he couldn't finish off Axel. There-in lies the problem: it wasn't Axel who did this. Axel could have been any other guy in the match on Raw and HHH still would have been hurt. That's the same problem that has plagued the HHH vs. Brock feud. Brock Lesnar could have been any other heel and now Curtis could have been any other guy who could hit a dropkick and throw right hands. It wasn't some big move from Axel that caused HHH to not be able to continue, but rather Lesnar's actions the night before.

That's what this boils down to: Lesnar and Axel are both just people who happen to be involved in a HHH story. It has nothing to do with either of them specifically, but rather they're just around and doing various things while HHH gets the glory (side note: Brock Lesnar has beaten HHH twice now. The night after both of those victories, HHH gets promos in the middle of the ring. Lesnar hasn't been live on either show) and the attention. This seems to be the start of some big long concussion angle with HHH and if we can get to Axel and Lesnar later on that's cool, but the focus is ALL going to be on HHH.

I'm fine with HHH having a storyline, but the thing is he's going to be around and likely on camera in WWE for the next twenty five to thirty years. Brock probably has a year or two left and Axel is just getting started. Do we really need to have HHH's big story NOW? Do we need to put him ahead of Lesnar and some new guy that apparently you're going to push as a big deal? From past experience with HHH stories, that's by far the biggest thing you're going to hear about over the next few weeks, because in HHH's WWE, he can't just be the big story. He has to be the ENTIRE story and Heaven help you if you disagree with him on it, because he has no problem telling you why it should be about him in a 20 minute promo.