

On This Day: June 5, 2000 – Monday Night Raw: Night of the Three Challengers

Monday Night Raw

Date: June 5, 2000

Location: War Memorial Auditorium, Rochester, New York

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

We're just after Judgment Day, meaning HHH has won the world title back from the Rock in an Iron Man match due to interference from the returning Undertaker. Other than that we've got Benoit and Jericho feuding over the IC Title, which is par for the course for the two of them. The company is on fire at this point and hitting on all cylinders so this should be an awesome show. Let's get to it.

We open with a clip of Undertaker earning a shot at HHH by winning a handicap match against X-Pac and Road Dogg. This was followed later in the night by Rock beating Edge and Christian to become #1 contender. The main event of the show was Kane pinning HHH to earn a world title shot. In other words, there are three #1 contenders.

In the arena tonight, Vince blames HHH and wants to know why Hardcore Champion Gerald Brisco isn't carrying his bag.

Theme song.

Here are HHH and Stephanie to open things up. HHH tells the fans to shut up so he can talk about how hot the competition is for his world title. The fans chant for Rocky as HHH talks about how much it means to be world champion. It means that you have beaten the very best and right now, there are three people that are the #1 contender to the title. The fans chant some very rude things at Stephanie to make HHH even angrier. HHH cuts them off by talking about how competition turns him on.

On the other hand, big egos turn him off. Yeah he has a huge ego, but

when you're as good as HHH, it's hard not to think so highly of yourself. However, his ego is nothing compared to the man with the huge grapefruits: Vince. The talk of his own fruits brings out Vince to take the mic from his son-in-law. Vince agrees that HHH is indeed good but his biggest accomplishment is marrying Stephanie. It was Vince that made HHH and it's Vince that can break him.

HHH says that while Vince may be Dr. Frankenstein, the monster can take over any time. He beat up Vince at Armageddon back in December and he can do it again. HHH slaps Vince and there goes the suit jacket. The brawl is about to be on but here's Shane to break it up. Shane blames the two of them for there being three #1 contenders. It was HHH that made the matches and it was Vince's ego that makes him want to fight HHH. Shane thinks maybe he should run the company and gets punched down for that line of thinking. All three guys get slaps from Stephanie and here's Rock to slowly rotate his head.

Rock talks about not seeing a family feud, a millionaire, or even the WWF Champion. Instead he sees three pieces of monkey crap being slapped around by a woman who only costs about \$2. Aside from that though, Rock is one of the three #1 contenders and he wants that title shot tonight. If that doesn't happening, then Rock will just come down there right now and beat HHH all over Rochester.

Rock heads to the ring but gets stopped by Kane's fires. Kane says that he's the #1 contender (mixed reaction) and he wants his title shot tonight. As Kane walks towards the ring, here's his big brother to the Kid Rock theme. Taker doesn't care about anyone else's issues because he wants a title match tonight, even if it means fighting with all of the three #1 contenders at once. Vince thinks all three should get their shots tonight, but first of all there's going to be a triple threat between the three #1 contenders. The winner gets their title shot later tonight. The segment was good but it didn't need to be twenty five minutes long.

Rikishi/Too Cool vs. T&A/Val Venis

Too Cool are tag team champions here. That's one of the great things

about this time period: Too Cool got WAY over while feuding with the Radicals over the spring and the company saw potential in them. Instead of jobbing them out for months, they gave them the tag titles at the end of May as a reward, while also giving them extra credibility. Today you would see them jobbed out in stupid comedy matches or left off television entirely for getting over against the writers' wishes. I mean, why would you want to have the wrestlers get over themselves, therefore doing the writers' work for them?

Test and Scotty start things off with Mr. Hotty clotheslining Test down and bringing in Grandmaster for their double elbow. Albert (Tensai) comes in and tries to ram Grandmaster into the buckle but pulls his hat off instead. A middle rope dropkick puts Albert down and it's off to Val vs. Rikishi, but the other big men triple team the Samoan down. Albert tries a sunset flip but Rikishi sits his 400lbs down on his chest. Everything breaks down and Scotty hits the Worm on Test, followed by the Hip Hop Drop (top rope legdrop) but there's no referee. In the confusion, Val hits Grandmaster with a title belt for the pin.

Rating: D. This didn't do anything for me although I forgot how stunning Trish was at this point. I'm also not clear on the reason behind having Too Cool win the titles last week and then lose in a six man here. The match wasn't much but it would set up two different feuds in the future so it's not all bad.

Post match Rikishi cleans house and gives Trish a Stinkface.

The McMahons and company reconcile in the back. Brisco slams a door on Crash Holly as he tries to sneak up on him with a chair to win the Hardcore Title.

King of the Ring Qualifying Match: Road Dogg vs. Chris Benoit

Benoit is Intercontinental Champion. X-Pac trips up Benoit to give Roadie a quick advantage but Benoit fires back with right hands and the back elbow to take Road Dogg down. Benoit loads up the swan dive but a Tori distraction lets X-Pac make the save. Not that it matters as the Dudleys run out to distract Dogg, allowing Benoit to hit a German suplex for the pin. This wasn't even two minutes long.

Post match the Dudleys load up a 3D to put Tori through a table but X-Pac makes the save.

Brisco talks with Patterson about how they're still friends despite feuding over the Hardcore Title. Crash sneaks in again and hits Patterson by mistake.

Kane says there are no allies or brothers in the triple threat

Here's Crash to challenge Brisco to a fight RIGHT NOW.

Hardcore Title: Gerald Brisco vs. Crash

Gerald comes out to Real American in a funny running gag. Crash pounds away on the floor to start before bringing in all the usual weapons. A trashcan lid puts Brisco down but here's Patterson with his soiled underwear, which wind up around Brisco's face. Brisco gets up a boot in the corner to put Crash down and both Stooges dive on top to retain Gerald's title.

Undertaker says Kane is right about there being no friends or brothers in the match tonight.

Kane vs. Undertaker vs. The Rock

HHH comes out to do commentary as the winner of this gets a title match later tonight. Rock and Undertaker slug it out to start but Kane helps his brother to pound Rock down in the corner. Rock hits Kane low to take him down and hits a Rock Bottom out of nowhere on Undertaker. Kane pops right back up with a chokeslam for two on Rock but it's time for the brothers to fight.

Undertaker knocks Kane to the floor but Rock is back up with right hands to the dead man. All three head outside now with Rock being double teamed until HHH jumps Undertaker. HHH sends Kane into the steps as well but Undertaker is back up and goes after Rock again before dropping HHH with a right hand. HHH blasts Kane with a chair which knocks him into a quick Rock Bottom on Kane sends Rock to the title match.

Rating: D+. It was short and energetic but not much more. I get the idea

they were going for here but you need more than four minutes for these three guys fighting. HHH going after Undertaker and Kane is fine, but why not go after Rock as well? The match was fine all things considered but with less than four minutes it didn't have time to develop at all.

Post match HHH immediately hits Rock in the head with a chair.

Godfather/Dean Malenko vs. Chyna/Eddie Guerrero

This is before Dean was a ladies man so it's just an oddball team. Eddie interrupts the Godfather's lines to tick off the fans. This is the followup to Eddie costing Godfather a match against Chyna on Heat. Godfather and Eddie start things off with Eddie being tossed into the corner but Chyna blocks the Ho Train.

Dean comes in and counters a rollup into a wheelbarrow suplex for two. A rana puts Malenko down and it's off to Chyna whose DDT is easily countered by Dean. The handspring elbow connects with Malenko in the corner before it's back to Eddie. Dean hiptosses him into the Godfather's Ho's, ticking off Chyna in the process. Back in and Eddie counters a tilt-a-whirl slam into a small package to pin Dean.

Rating: D+. Again this didn't have any time to go anywhere but notice again that they're putting a bunch of different acts out there to keep things from getting stale. Yeah we get some repetitive stuff in the back, but it's a bunch of quick shots instead of long drawn out segments to dull the fans' minds. In short: keep things moving rather than constantly putting the same stuff out there over and over again.

King of the Ring Qualifying Match: Hardcore Holly vs. Faarooq

It's a brawl to start of course with Faarooq pounding Holly down and getting two off a shoulder block. Holly is sent to the floor but referee Teddy Long holds Faarooq back. A clothesline gets two more for Faarooq back inside but he doesn't seem too hurried to pin Holly. They head back outside with Holly being whipped into the barricade, followed by more standing around. Back in and Holly escapes the Dominator and hits a Falcon's Arrow for the pin. Nothing again here.

Kurt Angle gives Edge and Christian a pep talk, saying that if they win their six man tonight, they'll have defended Stephanie's honor, which might earn the Canadians another tag title match.

Kurt Angle/Edge/Christian vs. Dudley Boys/Chris Jericho

Edge and Christian give the hometown of Kodak film a very special five second pose. Jericho starts with Edge as the fans are WAY into Jericho here. A dropkick puts both Edge and Angle down before it's off to Kurt. The heels take turns pounding away on Jericho with Christian getting two off his reverse DDT.

The fans want tables but get a double headbutt from Edge and Christian for two instead. A catapult sends Jericho into the corner and it's off to Angle to pound away. The fans still want tables and get a step closer to their goal with a hot tag to Bubba. Ray cleans house as everything breaks down. After Edge breaks up the 3D to Christian, Angle comes in with the Olympic Slam for the pin on Bubba.

Rating: C-. Basic six man tag match here with the crowd on fire throughout because of the tables. It's amazing how something that simple can work the fans into such a frenzy, but unfortunately those chants would continue long after the Dudleys were gone. Jericho and Angle would have their usual awesome matches soon enough.

Post match Jericho puts Angle in the Walls and the Dudleys 3D Kurt through a table.

Hardy Boys vs. Bull Buchanan/Big Bossman

Bull starts with Matt and a big boot puts Matt down. Off to Boss Man as Lita is watching in the back, having not yet hooked up with the brothers yet. Back to Bull for a backbreaker but he misses a leg drop. Off to Jeff who speeds things up as everything breaks down. Jeff hits a quick Swanton on Bull for the win. This was nothing.

Boss Man and Buchanan fight post match with Boss Man laying Bull out.

HHH wants to head to the ring alone tonight.

Post break HHH says the Faction (that's their actual name) is staying in the back tonight. Apparently Earl Hebner, who has had a lot of problems with HHH, is referee tonight. Cole also asks Stephanie why she never defends the Women's Title. She says it's because she has no contenders so here are Ivory and Jackie to say they'll fight. Stephanie makes a #1 contenders battle royal for Smackdown.

WWF World Title: HHH vs. The Rock

HHH is already lying as Stephanie comes to the ring with him. Rock jumps HHH during his water spit and the fight is on fast. Rock pounds away and knocks HHH out to the floor before whipping him into whatever hard objects he can find. They load up the announce table but HHH fights out of the Rock Bottom. Instead Rock whips him over the announce table and hits the champion low.

A clothesline misses HHH and he comes back with a neckbreaker to put Rock down. Rock is sent shoulder first into the post before we head back inside for some stomping in the corner. Hebner gets in HHH's face to give Rock a breather but HHH comes back with the jumping knee to the face for two. A knee drop to the head gets two more but HHH makes the mistake of going up top, allowing Rock to slam him down. Rock hits a neckbreaker and a Samoan drop for two but HHH comes back with a facebuster.

Cue the McMahon-Helmsley Faction to run interference as Rock makes his comeback. Rock knocks all of them off the apron before hitting the spinebuster and People's Elbow, only to have X-Pac break up the count. The match keeps going though but the referee goes down. A DDT puts HHH down as the Faction comes in to destroy Rock. Cue Undertaker and Kane to clean house, including Undertaker chokeslamming Rock down. HHH crawls on top for the pin to retain the title and tick off the crowd.

Rating: C+. You can't go wrong with Rock vs. HHH in the year 2000. The match was overbooked at the end but the rest of the match worked well enough given the constraints they were under. The fans were losing their minds for Rock here and those reactions would never quiet down. Good match here but they would have more masterpieces down the line.

Overall Rating: C. The show wasn't all that great, but there was a

notable energy going throughout the night which brought the show up a lot. That's one of the things you never get today as everything is so tightly bound to the rigid television structure. This show felt like anything could happen at any time and it made things much more exciting. Good stuff here but there were far better shows around this time.

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