

Monday Night Raw – February 3, 2003: The Evolution

Monday Night Raw

Date: February 3, 2003

Location: MCI Center, Washington D.C.

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

We're three weeks away from No Way Out and most of the card is pretty clear on the Raw side. The main event will be determined tonight as we have Jericho vs. Steiner for a shot at HHH's title. Yeah I don't know who's going to win either. Other than that we have the official start of something pretty famous tonight which we'll get to soon enough. Let's get to it.

Also on a personal note, this was my 15th birthday.

We open with Bischoff on the phone with Chief Morely and talking about signing Austin back to Raw. This is in Spanish due to WWE screwing things up. Morely can't hear him at the arena. Bischoff is in San Antonio, Texas to find Austin.

Theme song.

We're in English so King and JR can intro the show.

Here are Stacy Keibler and Test to open things up with Stacy returning after being hit in the face by a Jericho chair shot two weeks ago. Stacy says she's trying to put the incident behind her because she needed to be more careful. However, she does want Jericho to apologize so Test calls Chris out to do so. Jericho comes out and says he has more important things to worry about, like going to Wrestlemania as the world champion.

He's gotten over hitting Stacy in the face and suggests that Test be a big boy and get over it. Test says Jericho has five seconds to apologize and gets ready to go after him, but Christian jumps Test from behind, knocking Stacy down in the process. Test gets up and beats Christian down...and is booed for hugging Stacy. Yeah he's a jerk but he did the exactly right thing here. Why boo him?

Kane goes into Chief Morely's office and finds...RVD? Apparently Morely asked both of them to be here and Van Dam plans on asking for a rematch with Batista/HHH. First though, he wants to know why Kane bailed last week. It was because the mask was taken off but that's not good enough for Rob. "What are you, Spider-Man?" They're about to brawl when Morely arrives and makes a one on one match between the two of them later tonight.

Test sends Stacy back to the hotel and promises that this isn't over yet.

Dudley Boyz vs. 3 Minute Warning

Chief Morely (in charge tonight if that wasn't clear) assigns Rico as guest referee tonight. It's a big brawl to start with the Samoans taking over but the 400lb Rosey misses a split legged moonsault. Jamal gets caught in a Doomsday Device but Rico counts very slowly. The Dudleys load up a 3D on Rosey but Jamal rolls up Bubba for a fast counted pin.

Spike Dudley comes out and sets up a table, allowing Bubba to powerbomb Rico through the wood.

Bischoff is lost in San Antonio. That's better than being Lost in Cleveland.

Tommy Dreamer vs. ???

No opponent as HHH, Batista, Orton and Flair hit the ring instead of

presumably Hennigan or Cappotelli. HHH has a bad leg due to the Steiner attack last week so Orton and Batista take Dreamer down with ease. After a horrible beating to Dreamer, HHH says this is the greatest evolution of talent you'll ever see. Flair is the greatest of all time, HHH is the greatest today, and Orton and Batista will be the greatest one day. HHH says that he's everything Ric Flair is (more like Harley Race) and every woman wants to be with him. On top of that you take his mind and you have the best in the world.

HHH says he's the only diamond in this business but you have to look to the future. That brings him to Batista who is a monster of unbridled destruction. Then you have Randy Orton who has the business in his blood. HHH says Orton will be a diamond one day which is a nice metaphor. He also drops the name Evolution about five times as the official new name of the team, starting a path of destruction for the next year and a half.

Scott Steiner looks at some footage of the then unnamed Evolution attacking Steiner and then being beaten down again last week. As for tonight, he's taking care of business with his biceps.

Evolution is in a sky box.

Bischoff goes to Austin's house but is told Austin is at a bar by a man named Buford.

Clip from last week of Jazz returning and destroying Trish.

Victoria vs. Molly Holly

Non-title. There's a large clock in the corner counting down to Bischoff's time to fix Raw being up. Molly takes it to the mat for a quick one count before cranking on the arm a bit. Molly spins out of a snapmare before armdragging Victoria down a few times. A spinning side slam gets two on Molly before Victoria spins her down to the mat by the

hair. Victoria gets two off a suplex before avoiding the handspring elbow in the corner. Widow's Peak is enough to pin Molly in a quick match.

Post match Jazz comes out and hits the Jazz Stinger on Molly. Jazz shoves Victoria down as well before laying out Molly with a DDT.

Booker is fired up for his tag title shot but Goldust wants a deal first. If they win, great but if not then they split up.

Evolution has champagne.

Raw Tag Titles: William Regal/Lance Storm vs. Booker T/Goldust

Storm and Goldie start things off with Goldust cranking on the arm. A quick uppercut drops Storm and it's off to the very popular Booker T for some chops to the chest. Lance comes back with a leg trip before it's off to Regal who is taken down by Booker. Back to Goldust as the match is still slow paced. Regal comes back in and charges into an armdrag from Goldust.

Regal does some cheating via a knee to the back (he is a villain after all) and the champions take over. Willy comes in for a chinlock before it's back to Storm for a cravate. Back up and a Boss Man Slam puts Storm down but Regal pulls Booker off the apron to block the hot tag. Everything breaks down and a powerslam gets two on Storm. The challengers are sent into each other and a quick dropkick from Storm is good for the pin on Goldie.

Rating: C-. This was tag team 101 but not a very good example of it. Booker and Goldust were a solid act for a long time and I don't get the point of splitting them up when the division is such a wasteland at this point. Storm and Regal were solid in the ring but they weren't the most charismatic team in the world.

Booker says they have nothing to be ashamed of and it's not Goldust's fault. He's enjoyed their time together and they hug it out.

Bischoff goes to the saloon and tries to order a martini. This goes about as well as you would expect and Austin is in another bar elsewhere.

Kane vs. Rob Van Dam

Kane punches him during the finger point which is an idea more people should have used over the years. Van Dam comes back with some kicks and we have a standoff. Rob tries a monkey flip but gets caught in a powerslam for two. Kane can't gorilla press him and Van Dam goes after the leg like almost everyone else does. Kane is kicked to the floor and taken down by a dive from Rob to fire up the crowd.

Van Dam is sent into the post and a side slam gets two back inside. A kick to the chest sets up Rolling Thunder for two but a big boot puts Rob down. The top rope clothesline connects and Van Dam is down with a hurt neck. He's channeling his inner Bret Hart by goldbricking though...but here's Jeff Hardy for the DQ. Huh?

Rating: D+. The match was ok but the amusing part was hearing King and JR talk about Kane being such a bad partner. You could swap the name RVD for Daniel Bryan and this commentary could be used ten years later. This wasn't much to see but with just over four minutes to work with and a run-in ending what else could they do?

Jeff takes a chokeslam and the Five Star for good measure.

Booker is trying to find Goldust but he's gone to his hotel.

Post break and Jeff is still down in the ring. Cue Shawn Michaels who was going to talk to Chris Jericho but this will have to do. Jeff is mad at the world right now and Shawn has been there before. Shawn sees wasted

potential for Jeff and now it's time for a decision. Shawn talks about throwing Marty through the glass 15 years ago (more like eleven or so at this point), and even though no one liked the decision at the time, it made him who he is today. Jeff gets annoyed so Shawn superkicks him. There's something great about just kicking a guy in the face when he gets on your nerves. Shawn shines his shoe afterwards.

Sean O'Haire talks about democracy. This devil's advocate character still makes me salivate, but we got Rikishi vs. Roddy Piper out of it so it's all good right?

Maven vs. D'Lo Brown

They trade hiptoss attempts until Maven armdrags him down. We hit the mat with Maven holding a headlock as the fans are bored already. Brown comes back with a kneelift and sends Maven into the buckle as the booing continues. Maven hits what looked to be a spin kick and a backslide for two and a middle rope bulldog gets the same. Maven misses a missile dropkick and the Sky High powerbomb is good for the pin.

Rating: D-. This match exists. Next.

D'Lo's manager Theodore Long teaches us about black power post match.

Bischoff arrives at the other bar (thankfully there were already cameras waiting for him) and after the break still doesn't find Austin. Some guy makes fun of Bischoff and has beer poured on his head.

Evolution comes up to Goldust in the back and throws him into an electrical grid which shoots sparks everywhere. Great, it's this angle.

Goldust is taken away by EMTs during the break.

Scott Steiner vs. Chris Jericho

The winner gets the world title shot at No Way Out. Steiner shoves him down to start but Jericho rolls him up and poses. Scott takes over and pounds away in the corner before hitting a gorilla press drop. There's the elbow drop into the push-ups but Jericho grabs the referee to block a belly to belly suplex. A knee to the back sends Steiner to the floor so Jericho can send him into the steps. Steiner: "OW!" They head back inside for a surfboard submission from the Canadian.

Back in and Steiner hits something resembling a belly to belly suplex followed by a backdrop to take over. There's the belly to belly but Jericho counters a powerbomb into a failed Walls attempt. Now the powerbomb hits for two but Steiner charges into a boot in the corner for two by Chris. Jericho hooks the Walls but Steiner quickly makes the rope for the break. Chris snaps Scott's neck across the top rope but gets crotched on the top rope, setting up an Angle Slam off the top to send Steiner to the PPV.

Rating: D. Jericho was trying but Steiner was just horrible out there. Thankfully they kept this at about seven minutes instead of having it run 20:00 like the Rumble disaster became. Also did anyone believe Jericho had a chance here? Anyone? I didn't think so, but then again we have to try to have disbelief right?

Vince comes in to see Morely and laughs about Bischoff running out of time. If Vince isn't impressed next week, he's fired.

Overall Rating: D-. Evolution got its name, Bischoff couldn't find Austin, and we got the match that we knew we were going to get two weeks ago. Someone tell me what the fourth thing of note on this show was. This was two hours of nothing and a good sign of the problems this show would have for the rest of the year. The wrestling was bad, the promos were bad, the fans were baited and switched again on the Austin deal. Another horrible show this week.

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book on the History of Starrcade from Amazon for just \$4 at: