

Summerslam Count-Up – 1991: Bret Hart's Arrival

Summerslam 1991

Date: August 26, 1991

Location: Madison Square Garden, New York City, New York

Attendance: 20,000

Commentators: Bobby Heenan, Roddy Piper, Gorilla Monsoon

This is a show that almost no one remembers other than one match. The main event is Hogan/Warrior vs. Slaughter/Adnan/Mustafa, which would have been a much better match a few months ago when Slaughter was still a threat. Other than that we have the wedding of Savage and Miss Elizabeth who reunited at Wrestlemania VII in one of the best moments in company history. Let's get to it.

We open with Savage in the back getting ready while Alfred Hayes asks him questions. Savage says that he's ready and in the danger zone, but HAYES' TIE IS CROOKED. "NOW YOU'RE OK AND IT'S TIME TO GO CHECK MY BABY BLUE EYES!"

We get the regular intro with the theme of a match made in Heaven and a match made in Hell.

Ricky Steamboat/British Bulldog/Texas Tornado vs. Warlord/Power and Glory

Steamboat is just The Dragon here, complete with what looks like a lizard man costume and breathing fire. The heels get the jobber entrance and have Slick with them. Steamboat and Roma get things going as Gorilla is listing off the rest of the card. Roma slams him down and mostly misses a dropkick before posing. Paul goes to the middle rope but dives into the armdrag and Steamboat cranks on the arm even more. Ricky hits a much better dropkick to put Roma in the corner for a tag to Hercules who gets caught in some armdrags of his own.

Off to Tornado and the fans go nuts as he rams Herc's head into the buckle. Ten right hands to the head in the corner have Hercules in even

more trouble but it's off to Warlord vs. Bulldog which was a decent power feud. Bulldog hits the suplex for two and it's off to Steamboat for a top rope chop to the head. Warlord blocks a monkey flip though and it's back to Roma with a suplex of his own for two. Three straight backbreakers have Steamboat in even more trouble before it's back to Hercules for a gorilla press.

Steamboat starts fighting back but gets caught in a big hotshot to put him down. Here's Warlord again but he dives into two feet from Steamboat, allowing for the tag off to Tornado. The Texan cleans house but makes a blind tag to Bulldog who hits a cross body. That plus the Tornado Punch to Warlord is good for two as everything breaks down. Bulldog powerslams Roma down and Ssteamboat adds the high cross body for the pin.

Rating: C+. Nothing wrong with this as it was a basic six man tag to fire up the crowd. Everyone looked fine and the crowd was WAY into the smark god known as Ricky Steamboat. The heels were all about to be gone from the company with only Warlord making it to 1992.

Sean Mooney says to call some hotline to hear prerecorded comments from Liz and Savage!

Mr. Perfect says he's an awesome champion.

Intercontinental Title: Mr. Perfect vs. Bret Hart

Perfect has been champion since last November so he's a pretty big deal. He also has his Coach (former wrestler John Tolos) with him. Stu and Helen Hart are in the audience to watch their son. Feeling out process to start with Bret scoring first by hip tossing Perfect to the floor. Back in and Bret grabs a headlock followed by a crucifix for two. Bret puts the headlock on again as Heenan and Piper are going to war on commentary. Gorilla: "WILL YOU STOP???"

Perfect grabs at the hair to escape and chops Bret's chest off. A slam puts Bret down but he kicks Perfect away and slams him down, only to have Perfect kick him right back. Bret is all like screw this wrestling stuff and clotheslines Perfect to the floor. The champ tries to run but Bret throws him back in and the dude in pink is mad. Perfect gets in a HARD

kick to the ribs and Bret is sent to the floor where Coach whistles at him.

Bret tries to get up but is knocked off the apron and right on top of a production guy who has a very confused look on his face. Back in and Bret jumps over Perfect in the corner and gets two off a rollup. The fans are WAY into this so far. Perfect sends Bret chest first into the buckle to take over again as Heenan is starting to lose his marbles. Another hard whip into the buckle gets two for the champion followed by the Hennig neck snap for two more.

Hart is sent to the floor for a bit and they both come back in on the top. It's Bret crashing down to the mat to give Perfect two as Heenan is thinking Perfect should get himself disqualified. The champ hooks a sleeper but Bret fights up into a crucifix, only to be dropped down into a Samoan drop for two. The PerfectPlex looks to finish Bret but it only gets two, sending MSG into delirium.

Back up and Bret fights back, sending Perfect across the ring and crotch first into the post. A suplex and small package get two each for Bret and it's Five Moves of Doom time. Bret yells at the referee and gets rolled up for two before Bret starts going after the knee. He loads up the Sharpshooter but he has to knock Coach to the floor. The distraction lets Perfect get in a shot to take over. Perfect drops a leg between Bret's legs but as he tries it again, Bret grabs the leg and puts the Sharpshooter on from his back. He turns the hold over and Perfect submits really fast but it's good for Bret's first singles title.

Rating: A. Oh come on it's Bret vs. Perfect from Summerslam 91. Do I really need to explain this one? It's one of the best matches of all time and holds up over twenty years later. The counter by Bret is a great way to show how solid of a mat wrestler he was. Kicking out of the PerfectPlex was the perfect idea as Bret took the champ's best shots and still won. It's still excellent and required viewing for wrestling fans.

Bret celebrates with his parents.

The Bushwhackers are ready for the Natural Disasters and Andre is ready for Earthquake, the man who broke his leg a few weeks back.

Natural Disasters vs. Bushwhackers

Andre looks terrible here and would be dead in less than 18 months. The Whackers sneak up on the big men on the floor and poke them in the eyes. We finally start with Butch vs. Typhoon and the big man being bitten on the trunks. Earthquake tries to come in but splashes his own partner by mistake. A double clothesline puts Quake down and the Bushwhackers are in full control.

Earthquake finally realizes he weighs more than both Bushwhackers put together and pounds Butch down with a few shots to the back. Heenan makes an obscure Newhart reference as Quake slams Butch into the corner but misses an elbow drop to the back. The second attempt connects though and it's off to Typhoon for more fat man offense.

Off to an over the shoulder backbreaker on Butch which transitions into a bearhug by Earthquake. Heenan leaves to go find Hogan and embarrass him which we'll get to later. Quake finally hits Typhoon with a clothesline by mistake as everything breaks down. The Bushwhackers hit Battering Rams on both Disasters but it's finally the big men crushing Luke and the Earthquake for the pin.

Rating: D-. This was a waste of time and everyone knew it was going to be from the moment the bell rang. The Bushwhackers were the epitome of comedy bumpkins and there's nothing wrong with that. I'm not sure why they picked them of all teams for Andre to back and the match was horrible.

Post match the Disasters go after Andre but the LOD comes out for the save. This was Andre's last appearance for the company.

Heenan goes to Hogan's dressing room with the NWA World Title to issue a challenge. "Hogan" (you never see him) opens the door and slams it in Heenan's face. For the life of me I can't get over seeing that belt in the WWF.

Virgil recaps his feud with DiBiase. You're probably familiar with this one: Virgil was his bodyguard for years but at the Rumble, DiBiase pushed him just once too often and Virgil snapped. DiBiase lost to Virgil via

countout at Wrestlemania and tonight it's a rematch with the Million Dollar Title on the line.

Million Dollar Title: Ted DiBiase vs. Virgil

This is one of the very rare defenses of this title. DiBiase has Sensational Sherri with him. Piper is Virgil's mentor so the commentary is going to be rather slanted. Virgil starts fast and hits three straight clotheslines to send DiBiase out to the floor. Heenan is back on commentary but doesn't want to talk about Hogan. Virgil misses a dive to the floor and DiBiase sends him into the steps to keep him down. Back inside and Ted is in full control but he brags too much and gets caught in the Million Dollar Dream. The fans go nuts but Sherri comes in and blasts Virgil with her loaded purse for the DQ.

Rating: D. Actually hang on a minute.

The referee says the match MUST continue, sending Sherri to the back and Roddy into delirium. Virgil pounds on DiBiase in the corner but since he doesn't have much experience he can't do anything. He tries to whip DiBiase across the ring but gets countered into a ref bump to put both guys down. Ted yells at Piper like the true heel that he is before suplexing Virgil down. A piledriver lays Virgil out but since there's no referee, DiBiase rips the turnbuckle off instead. Ted yells at Piper once too often though, allowing Virgil to ram him into the buckle twice for the pin and the title. Piper goes NUTS.

Rating: D+. This is a good example of a match where the crowd and announcing make it much better than it would have been otherwise. Virgil just wasn't that good and this was his one and only storyline with the company due to there being nothing else to his character. How the guy kept a job for so many years with both WWF and WCW is beyond me.

The Mountie is ready for his Jailhouse Match with Boss Man. We get a clip of him shocking a handcuffed Boss Man from a few weeks ago. Mountie insults the New York cops who take the loser to jail later tonight.

Boss Man says Mountie is going to jail tonight.

Mountie vs. Big Boss Man

Mountie talks trash to start so Boss Man punches him in the mouth to take over. They slug it out with Boss Man hitting a back elbow and a splash for two. Boss Man hits his running crotch attack to the back of Mountie's neck followed by the sliding uppercut. Mountie dives into a good looking spinebuster for two but Boss Man chases Jimmy Hart instead of following up, earning him a trip into the steps.

Back in and Boss Man misses a splash in the corner as Heenan says it's not Mayberry for the Boss Man tonight. Mountie gets two each off some elbows and a dropkick but the kickout sends him to the floor. He pulls Boss Man to the floor as Gorilla calls Jimmy a walking advertisement for birth control. Back in and they slug it out with Mountie hitting a piledriver for no cover. Instead Mountie gets his shock stick but only hits the mat. A hard uppercut sets up the Boss Man Slam for two (I don't remember anyone not named Hogan kicking out of that) before another piledriver attempt is countered into an Alabama Slam to end Mountie.

Rating: D+. I've seen far worse and Boss Man's high impact offense is always worth a look. This is the perfect blowoff to the feud which is something you rarely see anymore. Today feuds just keep going with some random gimmick match which may or may not fit the feud. This was the logical ending to it and it was tailor made for the blowoff. Why they don't do this anymore is beyond me.

Mountie is dragged away by cops.

DiBiase goes on a huge rant about the title, saying that Virgil stole it and he'll get it back.

Bret says this is the best day of his career and he waited a long time to prove how great he is. I'm pretty sure we're in intermission.

The Natural Disasters are going to eat the Legion of Doom for dinner.

Boss Man asks Sean Mooney what kind of bird can't fly. A jailbird of course. He brags about winning a bit more.

Savage is nervous for the wedding.

Speaking of the wedding, here's the phone number again, complete with a countdown clock for a five minute intermission. Seriously they just count down five minutes of dead air time. AND THIS WAS ON THE HOME VIDEO.

Mountie arrives at the jail and shouts that the cops can't do this to him because HE'S THE MOUNTIE! He tries to read the cops their rights and gets thrown in a cell.

Jimmy Hart is panicking while his Nasty Boys are read for the LOD. It's a street fight later tonight.

Mountie is tricked into having his picture taken.

The Legion of Doom wants the tag titles. Hawk says once they win the belts they're going to chew up the Natural Disasters and spit them out "like the tartar that sticks to your teeth."

Mountie yells about having being fingerprinted. These bits are so overblown that they're hilarious.

Sgt. Slaughter and his cronies are excited about having a 3-2 advantage. Slaughter says he might have a surprise for later.

Sid Justice, the referee for the main event tonight, says that he'll call it down the middle. Gene shows us a video of Slaughter and company offering Sid a spot on the team but Sid says they stopped him but he turned them down.

Tag Titles: Nasty Boys vs. Legion of Doom

The Nasties are defending and this is No Countout/No DQ, making it a street fight in modern terms. The champions are sent to the floor and the fight is on early. Back in the ring Animal hits a quick powerbomb on Knobbs for two followed by Hawk enziguring Sags down. We get down to the stupid tagging part of the street fight with Sags sending Hawk to the floor and hitting him with a bucket of water.

Back in and Knobbs works over Hawk in the corner before Sags sends him into the steps. A back elbow gets two for Knobbs and a top rope version gets the same for Sags. Brian goes up top again but jumps into Hawk's

boot, finally allowing for the hot tag off to Animal. Everything breaks down and Sags hits Animal in the back with Jimmy's helmet for two. Hawk steals the helmet and lays out both Nasties, setting up the Doomsday Device on Sags for the pin and the titles.

Rating: D. This SUCKED as the street fight rule was barely used at all. It was little more than a few shots with the helmet when the referee wasn't looking anyway. Hawk and Animal barely broke a sweat out there as they were already talking about the Natural Disasters earlier tonight instead of worrying about winning the belts. This win was a long time coming though.

The Mountie is put in a cell by some VERY sweaty policemen.

I.R.S. vs. Greg Valentine

Uh....sure. Feeling out process to start so Gorilla recaps the show so far. Valentine takes over with a quick shoulder block and a clothesline. Somehow we're nearly two minutes into the match with this much action. IRS rolls to the floor as Gorilla says Undertaker and Jake Roberts might be here. Back in and Valentine slams him down, sending IRS right back to the floor.

The tax guy heads in again and puts on an abdominal stretch followed by a jumping clothesline for no cover. Off to a chinlock before IRS misses a knee into the corner, giving Greg the opening on the leg. The Figure Four is quickly broken by a grab of the ropes and a second attempt at the hold is countered into a small package for the pin by IRS.

Rating: D. The match wasn't even that bad but it had no business being on a pay per view. This would be the equivalent of the Divas match on a modern show to give the fans a breather between the big matches. Valentine was long past his point of being a star but he could still put people over like he did here.

Buy Hulk Hogan's PPV, which is a Best of Hogan show. I've heard of worse ideas.

Hogan and Warrior talk about their victims in the main event.

Ultimate Warrior/Hulk Hogan vs. Sgt. Slaughter/Colonel Mustafa/General Adnan

Sid Justice is guest referee and Hogan is WWF Champion. Hogan and Slaughter get things going but the Sarge wants to stall. Slaughter pounds on him in the corner but gets caught between the right hands of both superheroes. Off to Warrior for a clothesline followed by a double big boot to put Slaughter down again. A clothesline gets two for Hogan and it's back to Warrior. This is completely one sided so far. Hogan comes back in with a middle rope ax handle for two.

Sid breaks up some choking in the corner and the distraction lets Slaughter get in some shots on Hogan. Adnan, an old manager, comes in to rake Hogan's back and slowly pound away in the corner. Off to Mustafa (Iron Sheik) for the gutwrench suplex and the camel clutch but Warrior makes the save. Slaughter comes back in to choke away in the corner and send Hogan into Sid for a staredown. Sarge jumps the distracted Hogan and stomps away on the back.

Warrior breaks up a top rope something by Slaughter, allowing for the hot tag to the painted one. Warrior cleans house on Slaughter but runs into Sid for another staredown. Back to Mustafa who gets caught in a suplex but Slaughter blocks a tag. Slaughter puts Warrior in a chinlock, only to have the Ultimate One fight up and clothesline Sarge down. There's the hot tag to Hogan as Hogan chases the lackeys to the back with a chair. More on that later as Hogan throws powder in Slaughter's face and drops the leg to win.

Rating: D+. I'm not a fan of this one as the match was never in doubt at all, but above that the Iraq War had been over for six months so the interest in the feud was done long ago. Nothing to see here but the fans reacted pretty well to it. This would have been better as a house show main event instead of the main event of Summerslam. If nothing else there was a match around this time on a Coliseum Video with Slaughter/Mustafa/Undertaker against the superheroes. Wouldn't that make a much better main event here?

Hogan and Sid pose for a long time post match.

Mountie is in jail and a fat biker hits on him.

Hogan and Sid are STILL posing.

We get the video of Savage proposing to Liz and her responding with an OH YEAH. We also get a four minute music video highlighting their entire history together to a sappy love song.

The ring is set up like a chapel for the wedding. Savage comes out in a shiny tux with a big feather on his hat. Heenan: "Why is the second most important guy called the best man?" From what I've read this is a legit renewal of vows as the two were already married in real life. There isn't much to say here other than it's a wedding and no one interrupts it. This takes like ten minutes.

With the show in the arena done we go to the reception with Savage telling Heenan to beat it. Gene Okerlund does the ceremonial toast. They have the first dance and everything seems to be fine. Now we eat cake before heading over to the gift table where things get interesting.

First off, "WE GOT A BLENDER!!!" Savage freaks out as only he can as you would think he just got the WWF Title instead of a blender. Liz goes to open a present....and there's a cobra inside. She freaks out and Savage tries to pull her back, but Undertaker comes in and bashes him in the head with the urn. Jake Roberts comes in and holds the cobra in front of Liz's face until Sid makes the save with a chair to end the show. This would set up Roberts vs. Savage in the feud of the year which resulted in Undertaker's face turn.

Overall Rating: C-. This is an interesting show in that the first half is a much higher quality than the second half. The second half has all predictable matches where the winners were never in doubt, but that doesn't exactly make it terrible. The show is definitely entertaining and set up a lot of stuff down the road while launching Bret Hart up to the next level. It's worth a watch if you can find it in full but I wouldn't expect to be blown away.

Ratings Comparison

British Bulldog/Ricky Steamboat/Texas Tornado vs. Warlord/Power and Glory

Original: D

Redo: C+

Bret Hart vs. Mr. Perfect

Original: A+

Redo: A

Natural Disasters vs. Bushwhackers

Original: C-

Redo: D-

Virgil vs. Ted DiBiase

Original: B

Redo: D+

Big Bossman vs. The Mountie

Original: D

Redo: D+

Legion of Doom vs. Nasty Boys

Original: D

Redo: D

Irwin R. Schyster vs. Greg Valentine

Original: D+

Redo: D

Hulk Hogan/Ultimate Warrior vs. Sgt. Slaughter/Colonel Mustafa/General Adnan

Original: D

Redo: D+

Overall Rating

Original: D

Redo: C-

Dang this show ticked me off the first time.

Here's the original review if you're interested:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/07/25/history-of-summerslam-count-up-1991-a-wedding-that-goes-badly-what-a-new-concept/>

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