

Summerslam Count-Up – 1999: An Out Of Body Experience

Summerslam 1999

Date: August 22, 1999

Location: Target Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Attendance: 17,130

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

This is the end of the summer for an interesting year in the WWF. The main event is the now mega heel HHH and the returning Mankind challenging Austin for the world title, but there's another main attraction: Minnesota Governor and former wrestler Jesse Ventura is the guest referee for the second time in the history of this event. 1999 is a year remembered for a lot of flash and little substance but hopefully that doesn't hold true here. Let's get to it.

The opening video talks about various guest referees over the years, including Mike Tyson and both McMahons. Jesse Ventura talks about how he'll be the law in the ring and doesn't care what happens.

Jesse lectures Chyna and HHH about not cheating. Chyna is allowed to be out there but the pinfall has to be in the ring and it has to be legal.

The recently debuted Chris Jericho yells at Jericholic Howard Finkel for being late.

Intercontinental Title/European Title: Jeff Jarrett vs. D'Lo Brown

Brown holds both titles coming in and Jarrett's manager Debra is in a bikini with a coat over it. Jeff sends her to the back to make sure the fans completely hate him. In the back, Debra offers to escort Brown to the ring to get back at Jarrett. Jeff jumps D'Lo to start but the champion comes back with a powerslam for one. Another powerslam gets two and Jeff can't bail to the floor for a breather. A leapfrog is countered into a short powerbomb for two but Jeff comes back with a sleeper.

Brown is sent to the floor and a baseball slide sends him into the barricade. Ross gets in one of his eye roll worthy lines by saying Brown wasn't safe on that one. I love JR but when he gets bad it's hard not to cringe. A clothesline puts Jarrett over the barricade and Brown pounds away. This is basic stuff so far but not bad at all. Back in and Jarrett gets in some shots to take over as the fans are behind the champion.

Jarrett hits a tornado DDT on the arm and wraps it around the post. The fans are more interested in the recently named Puppies. Jarrett misses a running crotch attack and gets caught in a running Liger Bomb for no cover. A tilt-a-whirl powerslam gets two and a quick legdrop gets two. Brown misses a modified Swanton but here's Debra on the apron. Jeff gets the guitar but here's Brown's training partner Mark Henry to destroy the guitar over D'Lo's head to give Jarrett the titles. Debra of course rejoins Jeff eight minutes after leaving him.

Rating: C+. Nice opener here but the scent of Russo is strong in this one. Debra turned twice within a span of ten minutes in addition to interference and a run-in during a match for two titles at once. These two could clearly have a good match on their own but we had to bog it down with extra stuff anyway. That's Russo 101: yeah it can make things interesting, but at other times it gets in the way of good wrestling.

Edge and Christian are ready for Tag Team Turmoil (a tag team gauntlet match) tonight. They outgrew Gangrel and are ready for his new team: the Hardys.

Tag Team Turmoil

As mentioned, Edge and Christian start against the Hardys which is a layup for a good start. The Canadians are good guys here and we have six teams involved with the winners getting a tag title shot tomorrow on Raw. Naturally it's a brawl to start until we get down to Edge vs. Matt. A DDT puts the Hardy down and it's off to Christian for a double hiptoss for two. Christian BADLY misses a spinwheel kick but it's Gangrel interfering to give the Hardys control.

The Hardys take their shirts off to almost no reaction so you know they're evil here. Jeff hits a slingshot springboard moonsault for two

followed by Poetry in Motion to crush Christian in the corner. Matt takes forever to cover and brings in Jeff for a senton (not yet the Swanton) Bomb for two.

Edge makes the save and allows Christian to hit a double reverse DDT to set up the hot tag. Everything breaks down and it's Edge and Jeff running the barricades to set up a spear in midair. Christian dives onto them both followed by Matt mostly missing a moonsault to take everyone else out. Back in and Edge pulls Matt off the top, setting up a top rope elbow to give Christian the pin.

The third team in is Mideon/Viscera and the big man is starting with Christian. Viscera hits a quick Samoan drop for no cover and it's off to Mideon for a double elbow drop. A knee drop gets two but Christian avoids a middle rope elbow. Off to Edge who speeds things up but gets drilled by a spinwheel kick (again it barely connected but it's more excusable with Viscera). Edge avoids a charging big man and a double shoulder puts Viscera outside. Mideon is speared down for the pin.

Droz/Prince Albert (Tensai) are the fourth team and it's Albert quickly throwing Edge into the corner. JR gets on Jerry for not knowing anything about Albert but Lawler makes a great point: "Look at him and you know everything you need to know." Albert gets two off a neckbreaker as the announcers argue whether football careers matter in wrestling (Hint: most of the time they don't). Christian chop blocks Albert and the Downward Spiral sends Edge and Christian to the next match.

The Acolytes are here before the three count and it's Bradshaw working over Edge to start. Edge comes back with a swinging neckbreaker and a missile dropkick as JR is whiny because Lawler pointed out how stupid the football stats were. Bradshaw powerbombs Edge out of the corner for two and it's off to Faarooq. ANOTHER spinwheel kick barely connects (the production staff isn't on their game tonight) but Bradshaw gets a tag before Christian does.

A belly to back suplex gets two for Bradshaw and it's back to Faarooq for more basic power offense. We hit the chinlock for a bit before the Faarooq spinebuster sets up an arrogant cover for two. Edge gets up for a

DDT and it's a double tag to Christian and Bradshaw. Everything breaks down and Christian gets two off a tornado DDT. Edge drops Christian onto Bradshaw as the Hollys come out before the pin. The distraction lets Bradshaw kill Christian with the Clothesline to get us down to the final two teams.

Faarooq hits a quick Dominator on Crash but Hardcore makes the save. The cousins get in an argument over who gets to fight Faarooq but it's the Acolytes getting to beat up Hardcore. It's back to Crash who has no effect on Faarooq so the announcers bicker some more to entertain us. Hardcore finally gets the tag and dropkicks Faarooq, triggering a brawl between the cousins. Faarooq hits a quick spinebuster on Hardcore for the pin and the title shot.

Rating: C-. This match had the same issues that almost all gauntlet matches have: if these teams can get wins this fast, why don't they do it all the time? The matches are just quick segments instead of actual matches with the longest being a slightly longer version of a TV match. However there was hope on the horizon as Edge and Christian and the Hardys would have a rematch with ladders in two months. Also, a team is coming from Dudleyville in about two weeks. The magic approaches.

The Hollys fight again.

Big Show and Undertaker arrive.

Al Snow grooms his dog Pepper and warns him of Boss Man singing Ethel Merman songs. Good advice actually.

Road Dogg comes out to watch the next match. He wants a shot at the Hardcore Title tomorrow night but here's the brand new Chris Jericho to interrupt him. He's on a raised platform in front of the crowd and this is his PPV debut. Jericho is disappointed in this whole show. He can't believe it but Raw is Snore has been topped by Summerslam. The people here have been conned into paying for it and now they look like fools.

Jericho rips on the roster and says the worst is standing in the ring right now. No one cares about Roadie and his spelling. If Dogg wants to be impressive, spell lugubrious. He makes fun of Dogg's clothes and

haircut and says DX sure sucks. Road Dogg tells him to shut up and Jericho is SHOCKED. Dogg's mama cares about him but he's not sure if he should do the catchphrase because Jericho might take him up on it.

Hardcore Title: Al Snow vs. Big Boss Man

Boss Man is defending and Dogg is doing commentary. Before the match Snow leaves Pepper in a small kennel in the back. Snow: "You know Head came to the ring with me." Snow is waiting on Boss Man on the set and hits a high cross body to get us going. Dogg gets up and is going to be a roving reporter. Snow hits Man with a chair and they go to the back almost immediately.

Boss Man comes back with right hands and breaks a chalkboard over Snow's head. Pepper's case goes upside Snow's head but Snow hits him with the board. Boss Man steals a crutch to blast Snow in the back before sending him into the Pepsi machine. Snow avoids the falling machine and throws Boss Man into the side of an SUV. They open a garage door and head outside before going across the street to a bar.

They're fighting in front of the door and a superkick gets two for Snow. Snow is thrown through the patio furniture for two and we head inside. A shot with the Yellow Pages puts Snow down but he gets up to hit on some chick. Snow hits him with a magazine rack and they slug it out with broomsticks.

We hit the restroom for the required "comedy" spot with Boss Man taking soap in the eye. A beer to Boss Man's face slows him down and Snow chokes him with a chain. Snow moonsaults him through a table but Boss Man is up first. They head into the pool hall and Boss Man hits Dogg with a drink. Roadie comes back with a nightstick shot to give Snow the title in an abrupt ending.

Rating: C. This is one of the more famous hardcore matches and it's pretty harmless goofy fun. The division was at its peak here but the 24/7 Rule was coming to make it a total parody. It was less than eight minutes so it's hard to really complain about this one. Yeah it's bad but it's completely harmless for the most part.

Snow runs back across the street to check on Pepper but has to beat up Stevie Richards and Blue Meanie for some reason.

Jesse warns Mankind about using chairs and how it won't be allowed, but Mankind would rather talk about Geraldine Ferraro's electability.

Women's Title: Ivory vs. Tori

Ivory is defending and Tori is just horrible for the most part. Ivory painted the word sl** on Tori a few weeks ago to set this up. Tori charges in and hits a powerslam for two and it's time for a breather. The crowd is already dead for this and a back elbow gets two for the champion. Tori hits a pair of suplexes and some lame kicks for two. Ivory is loudly calling spots to keep Tori from screwing everything up. The fans chant TAKE IT OFF as Ivory hooks a big swing. Tori comes back with a horrible spear and a middle rope cross body for two. They horribly botch a sunset flip so they do it again with Ivory sitting on Tori for the pin.

Rating: F+. Tori looked good in a bra and tight pants and that's about it. Seriously, she was TERRIBLE and makes the modern Divas look like ring generals. Ivory was trying out there but she was hardly a miracle worker. Trish would debut soon but wouldn't get good for about four more years.

Post match Ivory tries to take Tori's top off but Luna Vachon makes the save, becoming the heel of the segment.

Rock verbally massacres Michael Cole by insulting his tie and implying Cole is a bit coome ci coom ca. Not that it matters as Rock is going to destroy Billy Gunn tonight. This was a bad time for Rock as he had a bunch of nothing feuds until he got back into the title hunt to close out the year.

Billy Gunn has a surprise under a tarp.

We recap Steve Blackman vs. Ken Shamrock. Blackman is recently back from an injury and they've been beating each other up for weeks. The result is another Lion's Den match with weapons hanging from the cage. JR and King do the narration here for some reason.

Ken Shamrock vs. Steve Blackman

This is in the Lion's Den which is that small cage which is NOT ripping off UFC. Not at all. You win by escape only. Blackman starts with the nunchucks but Shamrock comes back with profanity. Blackman chokes him down but gets caught in an armbar. Ken throws the nunchucks away and rams Blackman into the cage. Shamrock pounds Blackman down and whips him into the cage for a high kick to the head.

Blackman blocks a kendo stick shot and fires off kicks of his own before sending Ken into the cage. An atomic drop puts Shamrock down again and Blackman pounds him in the back with his martial arts sticks. Shamrock gets up and runs the cage wall to ram into Blackman with a kind of elbow to the face. A belly to back suplex puts Blackman down but Ken can't quite follow up.

Back up and Blackman hits a quick DDT but Shamrock snaps off a powerslam. An enziguri puts Ken down and Steve pounds away with a kendo stick. A big shot to the head puts Ken down but he comes back with a wicked belly to belly to take over. Ken hits Blackman in the head (shoulder) with the stick...and that's it. No reason is given but I'd assume a knockout, even though the announcers said you had to leave to win.

Rating: D+. This didn't do anything for me. It was basically a hardcore match in a confined area which isn't the most interesting thing in the world. It's a far cry from last year's version with Owen keeping up with Shamrock every step of the way. Granted this is Steve Blackman, a black hole of charisma instead of one of the best of all time. Nothing to see here but it wasn't horrible.

We see Shane attacking Test earlier today.

Test says this is serious tonight.

Test vs. Shane McMahon

This is a Greenwich street fight with love her or leave her rules. Test is dating Stephanie but Shane doesn't approve. If Test wins, Shane stays out of their lives but if Shane wins then the relationship ends. Test has bad ribs but Shane has no backup due to Test injuring every member of the Mean Street Posse. Scratch that theory actually as they come walking out

before the match. Thanks for wasting my time on the video of Test destroying all of them. The Posse has a couch set for them in the front row.

Test takes Shane down to start but Shane hits a quick spear back inside, only to be pounded in the corner. A backdrop puts Shane down as the Posse drinks champagne. Shane is sent HARD into the steps and then into the crowd for a drink to the head. Test catches Shane diving off the barricade and powerslams him down onto the floor. Shane staggers around ringside so Test launches him at the Posse to tip the couch over.

The injured Posse goes after Test and give Shane a mailbox of all things to crack over Test's head. A street sign stuns Test again and there's a framed portrait of the Posse shattered over Test's head. That's only good for two and the fans are getting into this. Shane does a great looking leapfrog and this a jumping back elbow to the face to put Test down. A corkscrew senton (Spiral Tap) of all things misses and Test comes back with right hands.

Another leapfrog is countered into a sweet powerbomb but Rodney of the Posse distracts the referee. Test's big boot hits the referee but he clotheslines Shane to the floor. The street sign puts Shane down again but here's the Posse again to take Test down. They load him onto the announce table so Shane can hit the top rope elbow through Test. For a non-wrestler, Shane can drop a gorgeous elbow.

The referee is back up (why did he need to be bumped? It's a street fight) but Test kicks out at two. The fans are really getting into this. Pete accidentally hits Shane with a sign but Rodney hits Test with his cast. That's only good for two and now the fans are fired up. Patterson and Brisco run out to take care of the Posse and make it one on one. Shane charges into the post and it's a pumphandle slam followed by the flying elbow to get Shane out of Test and Stephanie's lives.

Rating: B. This took a little bit to get going but the fans got into it at the end. It's a great example of a story carrying a match rather than the wild brawling. This was full of weapon shots and interference, but the story behind the match made people care about it. The people were

invested in Test and wanted to see him fight for the woman he loved. That's a classic story and it's going to work every time. Good stuff here.

Stephanie comes out to celebrate post match.

We recap the tag title match. With Vince having been revealed as the Higher Power, Undertaker has been dropped down to an evil tag team with Big Show. They're challenging X-Pac and Kane, who are in the beginning of a nearly year long story. Pac is Kane's first real friend and the other monsters hurt him, so Kane wants revenge.

Tag Titles: Kane/X-Pac vs. Big Show/Undertaker

Kane is in the always awesome inverted attire, meaning it's more black than red. The mash-up of Big Show and Undertaker's themes really doesn't work at all. It's a big brawl to start with Undertaker easily knocking X-Pac to the floor. Kane gets double teamed in the corner but he clotheslines Big Show out to the floor and Pac gets two off a high cross body to Taker. We start with X-Pac against Taker with the big man cranking on the arm. Pac escapes and wisely tags out to give us brother vs. brother.

Taker is knocked to the floor and Pac dives off the apron to take him down. The crotch chop earned X-Pac an elbow to the face and a smile from me. Kane saves him little buddy and take Undertaker down with the top rope clothesline. Taker comes right back with his running DDT but Kane is up almost immediately. Big Show comes in to throw Kane around and drops him with a superkick.

Since this is a battle of the giants it's time for some choking but we're not to the bearhug yet. A powerslam gets two on Kane and it's back to Undertaker to pound away in the corner. They slug it out and both guys go down with a double clothesline. The hot tag brings in X-Pac who catches Undertaker with a spinwheel kick (actually connects) but Big Show pulls the small man down. Everything breaks down and Pac is crotched against the post. Show slams Pac down and drops a knee to his chest. The size difference is remarkable when you see them next to each other.

There's the bearhug but X-Pac bites his way out of it. A cross between a chokeslam and the Boss Man Slam gets two for Show but Kane breaks up the chokeslam. X-Pac hits Show low and it's off to Kane to clean house. Everything breaks down again and X-Pac sends Taker into the post. There's a Bronco Buster to Big Show but he pops up and chokeslams X-Pac down....for two? Taker is MAD and goes after X-Pac in the corner before ending him with a tombstone for the titles.

Rating: D. This didn't do it for me at all. I couldn't stand X-Pac around this time and this is a great example of why. The whole idea of his character at this point was he wouldn't give up, which led to him beating a lot of guys FAR bigger than him. I don't have much of a problem with X-Pac against smaller guys, but when he's beating people Taker's size it was very annoying. The match was an extended squash.

Jesse gives Austin the same speech.

Billy Gunn vs. The Rock

The loser has to, shall we say, kiss up to the winner. Billy brings a fat chick with him for Rock to kiss if Rock loses. Gunn jumps him to start but Rock comes back with right hands of his own to send Gunn to the floor. They head up the aisle with Billy being sent into a metal barricade. Rock is sent into it as well and clotheslined down as Billy takes over. Rock comes back with a clothesline of his own as they fight by the Lion's Den. This is really dull stuff so far.

They head back to ringside with Gunn sending him into the steps but being rammed face first into the announce table. Rock puts the King's crown on Billy's head for a right hand. Back in and Billy chokes away before getting two off a neckbreaker. Gunn drops an elbow to the chest and gets two off a bulldog.

A Stinger Splash crushes Rock but he explodes out of the corner with a running clothesline. The floatover DDT takes Gunn down but Rock can't follow up. Rock gets two off a swinging neckbreaker and a Samoan Drop but the Rock Bottom is countered into a Fameasser. The fat woman comes into the ring but Billy goes face first into her. Rock Bottom and People's Elbow ends this a second later.

Rating: D+. What were you expecting here? Like I said, Rock was in a funk at this point and going from lame feud to lame feud with nothing for him to work with. I mean, BILLY GUNN is the best they can do for him at Summerslam? The match wasn't terrible but it was just killing time until the very obvious ending.

We recap the main event. Chyna actually won a #1 contenders triple threat over Undertaker and HHH but HHH went on a power trip, saying it was his shot. Mankind cost HHH a one on one match against Chyna for the shot and then beat Chyna for the title shot himself. HHH attacked Mankind's leg, leading to a fourth #1 contenders match, resulting in a double pin and a threeway tonight.

Jesse comes out first and says he's proud to be a wrestler. Here here!

WWF World Title: Steve Austin vs. Mankind vs. Triple H

Triple H and Austin start fast in the ring but Mankind pulls HHH to the floor and sends him onto the announce table. All three head into the ring with HHH being ping ponged back and forth by right hands from both guys. Mankind offers Austin a handshake but gets punched in the face instead. HHH is knocked to the floor and Mankind misses a charge at Austin to send him to the outside as well.

All three are on the floor now with no one having a clear advantage. Austin clotheslines Mankind down before slugging it out with HHH, allowing Chyna (HHH's manager) to send Mankind into the post. Jesse tries to separate Chyna and Mankind as HHH hits Austin's bad knee with a chair. Ventura asks the crowd if HHH hit Steve with a chair but doesn't do anything about it once they say yes. Mankind is back in now but gets pounded down in the corner by HHH.

A quick Mandible Claw slows HHH down but Chyna breaks it up by crotchting Mankind on the post. That earns her an ejection and a lecture from Ventura. Austin is back up now and pounding away on HHH in the aisle. They fight back to ringside where Austin's bad knee is wrapped around the post. A chop block puts Austin down but Mankind is getting back up again. He breaks up a stomping from HHH to Austin, only so he can stomp Austin instead. Now they stomp Austin together to a loud chorus of boos.

HHH puts on a spinning toe hold but breaks up a cover attempt by Mankind, starting a fight between the two of them. HHH is knocked to the floor but Mankind misses a dive off the apron. Austin's knee is almost wrapped around the post again but Mankind intercept it and brawls with HHH into the crowd. A piledriver on the concrete is broken up and Austin fights HHH again. Everyone heads back inside and there's a low blow from Austin to HHH.

The Stunner takes down Mankind but HHH breaks it up with a chair shot. Ventura yells at HHH about it before HHH knocks Mankind out with the chair as well. HHH covers Mankind but Jesse isn't counting a cover off an illegal move like that. Shane runs in to plead HHH's case but gets Stunned for his efforts. Ventura throws Shane out but HHH and Steve clothesline each other down. Mankind loads up Socko and both guys get a mouthful of it but Austin kicks Mankind low to break it up.

HHH loads up the Pedigree on Mankind but Austin clotheslines HHH down to break it up. Austin punches both of his challengers and hits a Stunner on HHH but Mankind breaks up the count at two. Austin sends Mankind into the post but walks into the Pedigree. Mankind pops back up though and knocks HHH down before hitting the double arm DDT on Austin for the pin and the title in a surprise.

Rating: D+. This wasn't all that great of a match. At the end of the day it was a pretty slow paced brawl and HHH wasn't on this level yet. Still though, it wasn't terrible and Jesse added some good moments to the match. This wouldn't wind up meaning much for reasons I'll get into in a bit. It's a nice moment though.

Post match HHH destroys Austin and his knee with a chair, putting him on the shelf for a month.

Overall Rating: D+. This show is a product of the times and political issues kept it from having the big moment it was looking for. HHH was scheduled to win the title to end the show but Jesse didn't want to raise a heel's hand to end the show. The title change would take place the next night on Raw and HHH would have his first title defense on a new show called Smackdown later this week. The show is totally forgettable though

with only the street fight and the main event being notable at all. Not worth seeing but there are worse shows.

Ratings Comparison

Jeff Jarrett vs. D'Lo Brown

Original: B-

Redo: C+

Tag Team Turmoil

Original: B-

Redo: C-

Big Boss Man vs. Al Snow

Original: B

Redo: C

Ivory vs. Tori

Original: F

Redo: F+

Ken Shamrock vs. Steve Blackman

Original: B-

Redo: D+

Shane McMahon vs. Test

Original: B

Redo: B

Unholy Alliance vs. X-Pac/Kane

Original: D+

Redo: D

Billy Gunn vs. The Rock

Original: B-

Redo: D+

HHH vs. Steve Austin vs. Mankind

Original: B+

Redo: D+

Overall Rating

Original: B-

Redo: D+

WOW and I thought 1990 was screwed up.

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/08/03/history-of-summerslam-count-up-1999-the-body/>

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