

Monday Night Raw – February 11, 2002: Time For A Wedding!

Monday Night Raw

Date: February 11, 2002

Location: Jonesboro Convocation Center, Jonesboro, Arkansas

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

This is going to be one of those one idea shows, as tonight is all about Stephanie and HHH renewing their wedding vows. These would be the vows originally made by HHH, speaking in a falsetto voice since Stephanie was unconscious in the front seat of his car. Other than that, it's the go home show for No Way Out, but we need to focus on HHH and Stephanie instead of waiting for next week, after the PPV. Let's get to it.

We open with a package hyping up the wedding vows tonight.

Theme song.

Here's Undertaker with something to say to open us up. Taker respects the face pop he gets but calls the fans a bunch of hillbillies. He rants about not being respected by Rock on Thursday and we get a clip of Rock laying Undertaker out, giving Maven the pin and the Hardcore Title. Taker responded by tombstoning Rock onto a limo. He threatens to beat Rock until Rock respects him. That's not quite as good as "the beatings will continue until morale improves." This brings out Flair to talk about respect a lot and make Undertaker vs. Austin for later tonight.

Chris Jericho vs. Edge

Non-title of course. Edge jumps Jericho during his entrance and beats him around ringside until we get a bell. Back in and Jericho pounds away at the head instead of Edge's heavily taped ribs. First the arm last week

and now the ribs? Come on Jericho. A clothesline gets two for Edge but Jericho comes back with an elbow to the face and another to the ribs, restoring my faith in the Ayatollah.

Jericho stays on the ribs but misses a charge into the post, giving Edge an opening. A catapult into the corner gets two for Edge but Jericho comes right back with a bulldog, only to miss the Lionsault. Edge misses the spear but counters the Walls attempt into a rollup for two. Jericho drapes him over the top rope but goes to get a title, allowing Edge to spear him down for two. Not that it matters as Jericho hits him in the ribs with the belt and the Breakdown (Skull Crushing Finale) is good for the pin.

Rating: C-. Edge wasn't at the main event level yet but his time was coming. This kind of basic psychology is all a match needs most of the time and it's annoying when it's just not there. This is the kind of stuff we could use more of today: world champions or main event level talent beating midcarders instead of other main eventers. You can save the main event matches for actual, you know, MAIN EVENTS.

Vince says he's here in Arkansas because he's fond of hogs. He's here for the last show before the NWO arrives and takes over. He won't answer if he's going to walk Stephanie down the aisle.

We get another clip of the NWO. I guess this is a theme tonight. Remember that this is a mere THREE MONTHS after the Invasion ended. Again, that thing could have gone on for years by bringing in big names every now and then to give the Alliance a boost.

HHH and Stephanie run into each other in the back with Stephanie begging him to not go after Kurt. The baby is fine after Stephanie was run over (by a person) on Smackdown. HHH says he won't go after Kurt but he has to take care of something first.

Goldust vs. Rikishi

Goldust tries to jump Rikishi but gets punched away. It turns into a slugout with Goldust punching him down, only to get caught in a Samoan drop. The Banzai Drop is countered with two legs to the groin, but RVD comes in for the DQ a few seconds later. Seriously, Goldust vs. Van Dam? That's kind of a waste.

HHH runs into Arn Anderson and Arn just happens to have a FedEx package for him. It sounds like a video tape when HHH shakes it.

Austin says he was scared when he got here because it's a dry county (meaning alcohol can't be sold). This is at the height of the WHAT bit so Austin lists off all of the health problems he had because of the lack of alcohol before listing off all of them alcohol he and Debra bought in another county before coming here. He and the Arkansas hillbillies are going to disrespect Undertaker all night long. He'll take the Undisputed Title on Sunday too. Somehow this takes about five minutes to get through.

The wedding singers practice for later.

Godfather vs. Kurt Angle

This is during the failed Godfather Goes Legit period where he owned an escort service instead of being a pimp. Angle pounds him down but gets caught by a knee/boot to the chest/shoulder area. Kurt is like screw that and drills him in the leg before ending this in less than a minute with the ankle lock.

Post match Angle puts the hold on again before making a vow of his own: he'll make HHH tap on Sunday.

HHH gives Stephanie a new ring. Much crying ensues.

Steve Austin vs. Undertaker

Jericho jumps Austin during the entrance and Undertaker takes advantage with some Deadman choking. They head inside for the opening bell and Austin comes back with some right hands and the Thesz Press for more right hands. They run the ropes a bit before Undertaker takes Austin down with the jumping clothesline. Back to the floor and Taker is whipped knees first into the steps, only to come back with a clothesline to send Austin onto the concrete. That goes nowhere so we head back inside with Taker getting a near fall. Austin escapes the tombstone and hits the Stunner but here's Jericho for the DQ.

Rating: D+. Remember when these guys main evented the biggest Summerslam ever a few years ago? Apparently WWE doesn't either as we've got them in a five minute throwaway match to close out the first hour of Raw. Nothing to see here as these two are clearly in need of ANYTHING new.

Post match Jericho hits Austin with a belt and a cooler.

Jericho bailed during the break.

Tazz vs. Booker T.

Tag champion vs. challenger for Sunday. Simple idea for a simple PPV match. Booker pounds Tazz down into the corner but Tazz comes back with some clothesline. A side kick puts Tazz right back down and there's the Spinarooni to annoy JR. Tazz comes back with the Tazmission, only to have Spike and Test come in for a distraction so Booker can kick him low. The referee gets rid of Spike so Test can kick Tazz's head off, giving Booker the pin. Nothing to see here at all.

The Dudleyz are at WWF New York. Bubba is in his old trance for some reason before demanding a title match at the PPV. Not that they would get one but at least they're acting like the titles mean something.

Stacy Keibler vs. Torrie Wilson

They're in bikinis so this isn't going to last long. This is as a result of Torrie having her hand raised after she and Stacy won a posedown against Billy and Chuck. It's exactly what you would expect: Jerry makes erection jokes, the girls do stuff that puts them in various, ahem, positions, the referee is rolled over, Stacy wins with a bad looking rollup. This was what it was.

Stephanie leaves to get dressed but laments that her dad isn't walking her down the aisle. HHH looks at the package he was given earlier.

Mr. Perfect cheats to beat a national chess champion. These bits never get old.

Rob Van Dam vs. Christian

Christian, currently in a slump, runs in behind RVD to get an early advantage. Rob misses a charge into the post and gets draped over the top rope. Christian knocks him onto the floor and stomps away a lot before ripping at Van Dam's face in the ring. Rob gets back up and hits a moonsault press out of the corner for two, only to have Christian pound him right back to the mat. A powerslam gets two for Christian and it's off to a chinlock. Make that three different chinlocks, none of which have the fans responding at all.

Back up and Rob hits a spin kick to put Christian down, followed by a monkey flip out of the corner. A Regal Roll into a middle rope moonsault (barely connected at all) gets two for Rob but Rolling Thunder hits knees. The reverse DDT gets two for Christian and it's time for him to throw a tantrum. He writhes around on the mat, allowing Rob to come in off the top with the Five Star for the pin in a funny ending.

Rating: C-. The ending was good but there wasn't much leading up to it. Christian was nowhere near being a big deal on his own yet as he would have to wait years before he became anything of note. Van Dam would be the same kind of guy for almost his entire WWE run, which isn't bad when

you think about it.

Goldust pops up on screen to challenge RVD for No Way Out.

Arn Anderson tells HHH to call Linda.

HHH calls Linda (naturally we can hear everything she says) who tells him that she sent him the FedEx package. It is indeed a video tape which someone sent to her and she immediately sent it to HHH. HHH plays the tape and it's a doctor that told HHH and Stephanie that their baby was fine as an actor in a commercial. Dun dun DUNN! Stephanie isn't pregnant, which would have been a bigger revelation had this story not started last week.

Stephanie keeps up the lie to the wedding singers. Vince pops up behind her in a tux and cuts a promo on her before agreeing to walk her down the aisle. Howard Finkel pops in to try to tell Vince what HHH found out but Vince tells him to leave.

Time for the vows and Vince is already annoyed at the WHAT chants. Now we get a wedding song because this segment isn't already going to go on forever. We know where it's going because we already saw the payoff. Why not have HHH reveal it during the ceremony to actually surprise the crowd? I'm running out of things to talk about to pass the time during this WAY too long song. Seriously they sing for FOUR MINUTES.

It's finally time for the vows. Stephanie does a traditional series of them and now it's time for HHH to end the whole thing. It's exactly what you would expect: he loves her, she's the mother of his child, she's a no good lying witch. HHH erupts on her for only thinking of herself and trying to manipulate him into doing whatever she wants. The marriage is over and there's a Pedigree for Vince and Stephanie's EVIL face to end the show.

Overall Rating: D. Here's the major problem at the end of the day: how does this wedding, which DOMINATED the show, make me want to buy No Way Out at all? The NW0, the world title match, and Undertaker vs. Rock (not even on the show tonight) all came off as afterthoughts compared to an angle that started and ended in a single week. There was zero reason this couldn't have happened next week instead as we set up HHH vs. Stephanie at Wrestlemania.

Here's No Way Out if you're interested:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2013/03/18/no-way-out-2002-if-an-invasion-happens-and-no-one-cares-does-it-matter/>

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