

Ode To The Big Gold Belt

This was going to be my second column for the newsletter but that's been put on hold for now. I might try to do more of these if they go over well.

TLC has come and gone and of course the biggest story is title unification. Instead of the WWE Championship and the World Heavyweight Championship, we now have the WWE World Heavyweight Championship. Barring a major surprise, the title will be represented by the WWE Championship going forward as there's almost no way a belt will debut and be retired in less than one year.

The World Heavyweight Championship will be leaving us soon and that makes me a sad KB. Therefore, I present to you my Ode to the Big Gold Belt.

First off, the title itself is just good looking. It's really as simple as that. Look at the World Heavyweight Championship and tell me it doesn't look awesome. The design was introduced for Ric Flair back in 1986 because promoter Jim Crockett thought a wrestler larger than life like Flair needed a larger than life title. The belt makes anyone look like a champion and is so classy and elegant that it makes anything else pale in comparison.

Another thing the title did was give some people a chance. Over the last eleven years the World Heavyweight Championship has allowed some wrestlers to become a world champion when they wouldn't have been able to otherwise. Names like Booker T, Jack Swagger, Kane, Dolph Ziggler, Mark Henry and Christian weren't going to win the top title in the company but the World Heavyweight Championship allowed them to be called a world champion for the rest of their lives.

Next up are four simple worlds: Money in the Bank. While the concept has been run into the ground over the years, there are a few moments where the World Heavyweight Championship cash-in blew the roof off the arena. The biggest moment of all these: Dolph Ziggler the night after Wrestlemania 29. Think back to that moment and remember how insane the arena went when his music hit. The place came unglued and Ziggler won the World Heavyweight Championship for the first time (yes it was his second reign but the first time the belt was awarded, not won).

On top of the moments the title has given us, it has also given us some incredible matches. Over the years there have been classics for the World Heavyweight Championship such as Randy Orton vs. Christian, Undertaker vs. Edge, Mark Henry vs. Randy Orton and Sheamus vs. Daniel Bryan. At the top of the list though is the main event of Wrestlemania 20, with Chris Benoit defeating Shawn Michaels and HHH in an absolute masterpiece for the title. Benoit winning the title by making HHH tap out in the middle of the ring in Madison Square Garden is as perfect of a way to win the title as you can possibly find.

Last but not least, the title served as a nice historical reference. While the history of the title isn't what the WWE would have you believe (that's a long story for another time but in short, the title being called the same as the NWA Title is nonsense. At best the title can be traced back to 1991 and that's stretching further than humanly possible), the design of the title is something that brings back memories of an era long since passed. With wrestling changing as much as it has in the last few years, it's nice to be able to remember a simpler time.

Overall the World Heavyweight Championship represents an era of WWE. Over the last decade plus it has given us everything from nostalgia to great matches to pops that blew the roof off. I'm sad to see it go as it meant a lot over the years, even when it was little more than a midcard title. Here's to you Big Gold Belt. May you shine on forever.