

Monday Night Raw – April 15, 2002: Only In Wrestling Would This Be A Heel Promo

Monday Night Raw

Date: April 15, 2002

Location: Reed Arena, College Station, Texas

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

It's the go home show for Backlash and to say things aren't all that interesting is an understatement. The main story is Ric Flair replacing Vince as the newest authority figure for Austin to rebel against. Pay no attention to the fact that it feels completely forced and isn't exactly firing up the fans. Let's get to it.

Here's Flair to open the show and talk about Austin Stunning him last week. There's no hard feelings because he loves Austin and doesn't want a war. The Stunner wasn't cool though but Austin cuts him off before he can go any further. Flair will accept the first Stunner from a few weeks ago but won't take last week's lying down. Austin's penalty: a \$5000 fine.

Austin gets his own mic and lists off people he didn't face last week before saying Flair put him in the ring with Scott Hall. Flair didn't help him last week and Austin didn't need him to. That's the bottom line but here's Undertaker to keep this segment going. In a speech that somehow takes nearly two minutes, Undertaker says he'll beat Austin on his own while Austin needs Flair on Sunday. Both guys threaten Flair if he gets involved at Backlash, so Flair makes himself guest referee.

This brings out the NWO because 2002 Monday Night Raw was really annoying. Hall complains about Flair getting involved in the main event last week and wants another piece of Austin tonight. Flair says no but Bradshaw comes out for a big brawl to finally end this stupid segment with Flair looking livid.

Post break Flair makes Austin/Bradshaw vs. Hall/X-Pac/Undertaker for the

main event.

Hardcore Title: Bubba Ray Dudley vs. Raven

Bubba is defending and Raven brings out a shopping cart full of goodies. They trade weapons shots to start until Raven is slammed off the top. He comes back with various other hard objects to Bubba's head including a trashcan but Bubba says bring it on. They collide in the corner and bash each others' brains in with trashcan lids until they're both down. Bubba takes over and slams Raven down before dancing into an elbow drop. He tells himself to get the tables but takes too long, allowing Raven to DDT him for the pin and the title.

Tommy Dreamer comes out and hits a Death Valley Driver for the pin and the title.

Stevie Richards comes out and superkicks Dreamer for the pin and the title.

Bubba gets up and hits Richards with a guitar for the pin and the title to end the segment.

Rating: D-. After a long opening segment that went nowhere, I have to sit through this tired idea for another five minutes? The joke is dead already so let's just have the same guys do the same stuff for weeks on end right? Also, Tommy Dreamer shouldn't pin Raven in six seconds, period.

Big Show vs. Shawn Stasiak

Shawn goes for the leg to start, it works for a bit, then it doesn't work, chokeslam and we're done.

Eddie says that RVD stole the Frog Splash and the Intercontinental Title but he'll take them both from Van Dam on Sunday. He and Regal will beat RVD and Spike tonight as well.

Goldust kind of apologizes for costing Booker the Hardcore Title last week but gets more bizarre than usual of course. Booker says he's getting too old for this.

Debra spills coffee on Undertaker and is scared of what might happen. End of segment.

Jackie vs. Crash

Jackie hits him once, goes up top for a missile dropkick and sunset flips him for the pin in thirty seconds. She's from TEXAS you see.

Regal says he'll get his title back on Sunday.

Rob Van Dam/Spike Dudley vs. William Regal/Eddie Guerrero

Nothing wrong with combining two feuds into one match. Regal, ever the evil Englishman, jumps Spike before the bell and knocks him outside. RVD starts with Regal and kicks him down as JR talks about the educated feet. A monkeyflip puts Regal down and it's off to Spike and Eddie with the latter scoring with a quick tilt-a-whirl slam.

Back to Regal for a German suplex to send Spike outside for a cheap shot from Eddie. Double teaming ensues for a bit until Spike "accidentally" hits Regal low and tags in Van Dam. Everything breaks down and Rob hits all his signature stuff for a series of two counts. Regal kicks Spike down as Rob is sent to the floor, setting up the frog splash on Dudley for the pin.

Rating: D+. Not much to see here but it could have been worse. If nothing else it's nice to have a match that lasts more than three minutes tonight after all those worthless encounters earlier. Also did we really have to see Spike get pinned after winning a title just a week ago?

Rob kicks Eddie down and loads up the Five Star but Regal makes the save.

Molly and Trish are in the back with Molly calling Trish a w****. The big reveal of all this is that Molly is a virgin, which of course makes her a heel because it's the WWF.

Molly Holly vs. Trish Stratus

The winner gets a title shot against Jazz at Backlash. Molly is all ticked off and hiptosses Trish down to start before cranking on an

armbar. The fans want puppies as Holly stays on the arm, only to duck to the floor to avoid a right hand. Stratus rams her into the announce table but walks into some elbows back inside for two. A backbreaker gets the same but Molly misses the Molly Go Round as the announcers argue over waiting for marriage. The Chick Kick gets two on Molly before Trish reverses a rollup out of the corner for the pin.

Rating: D+. Both girls looked great but the commentary was rather disturbing. I mean...since when is being a virgin the worst thing a woman can do? Could it be that Vince McMahon is a sex obsessed dirty old man that thinks women are little more than objects? Well when he isn't treating muscular men as objects that is.

X-Pac wears Kane's mask, making the backstage area look a bit better.

Lita is worried about Matt fighting Brock Lesnar on Sunday so Heyman comes in and implies he'll have Lesnar go easy for sex. Lita is OFFENDED so Heyman takes one of her thongs and earns himself a slap.

Hardy Boys vs. Goldust/Booker T

It's a brawl to start until Goldust and Matt get things going. Booker quickly gets the tag and punches Matt in the face before stomping him down near the corner. Matt comes back with a quick Side Effect and the too early to be tag brings in Jeff. The more famous of the Hardys cleans house and back to back Poetry's in Motion have the Hardys in control. Heyman comes out with the STOLEN THONG and lures Matt to the stage, allowing Booker to hit the Book End on Jeff for the fast pin.

Heyman is sitting on the stage with Lita's suitcase, drawing Matt up the ramp with a bra. Brock comes out and the fight is on, resulting in the F5 on the stage. Lita and Jeff freak out as Lesnar leaves.

HHH comes out and spends the better part of ten minutes saying the following: he's the champion, he's the UNDISPUTED Champion, he'll beat Hogan, Hogan was stupid to come back, and he'll beat the winner of Austin and Undertaker. Seriously, ten minutes.

Bradshaw/Steve Austin vs. NWO/Undertaker

Big brawl to start until we get down to Undertaker vs. Austin. Undertaker slugs him around but walks into the Thesz Press. He escapes the Stunner so Austin flips him off, earning a tag to X-Pac. A quick mudhole is stomped and the whip spinebuster puts X-Pac and Hall down before it's off to Bradshaw. X-Pac gets in his first real offense with a spinwheel kick and the heels take over.

Off to Hall for some right hands but Bradshaw scores with a big forearm to the back. A DDT gets two on Scott and it's back to Austin who gets sent to the floor for a beating by Undertaker. Back in and X-Pac clotheslines Austin down for two but Hall gets the tag and a double clothesline puts both legal men down. Bradshaw comes in and cleans house with big boots as everything breaks down. Austin and Undertaker fight to the floor and the Clothesline from Bradshaw is enough to pin X-Pac.

Rating: D. So uh....YAY TEXAS? Seriously was there any other point to this match except for making Texas look great? The match was nothing to see and the NWO is just stupid at this point. Austin is going through the motions and that could be said for the entire show. Not a bad match but totally uninspiring.

Undertaker clocks Austin with a chair to end the show.

Overall Rating: D-. I can tolerate bad shows. I can tolerate stupid shows. I have a very hard time sitting through shows where it's clear that no one cares at all and that's what's going on here. It's clear that no one has any interest in what's going on around here and that there's no effort being put in at all. That drives me crazy and makes these shows impossible to sit through.

Here's Backlash if you're interested:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2012/05/22/backlash-2002-the-definition-of-bleh-meh-eh-and-all-other-uninterested-non-words-you-can-think-of/>

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