

Wrestler of the Day – February 18: Jacques Rougeau

We're going north of the border today for Jacques Rougeau.

Rougeau started in Canada in the 70s before moving to the US territory scene. He and his brother would make it to the WWF in 1986. One of their first major matches was at the Big Event in Toronto on August 28.

Fabulous Rougeaus vs. Dream Team

The Dream Team is Valentine and Beefcake who Valiant usually manages. The Rougeaus are wearing red for some reason. Oh great and Valentine is too. We get an abdominal stretch and naturally Monsoon complains. The Rougeaus are one of those teams that just flows so well that it's amazing to say the least. They're also great high fliers that can just show off, kind of like the Hardys or something like that. Good night there are a lot of people there.

This is your standard 80s tag match which means that it's pretty good. Beefcake just sucked back I the day though and this is no exception. He would be replaced by Bravo at Mania 3. After a very long and drawn out match which thankfully got enough time, we hit the brawl and Valentine has the figure four. In a SWEET ending, the illegal Rougeau gets a sunset flip on him as he bends over to put the hold back on for the pin. I love that.

Rating: B-. This was another fun and good match that did its job well. It's the second longest match of the night after the draw from earlier and it's one of the better ones on the card. It was solid but the really needed to get Bravo out there ASAP. Valiant is ticked off over that ending.

These teams would meet again at Wrestlemania III.

Dream Team vs. Rougeau Brothers

The Dream Team is Brutus Beefcake and Greg Valentine but they've been having problems lately. Dino Bravo and Johnny V are with them here. Ray and Brutus start things off with Ray sending Brutus into the Rougeau corner for some double teaming. Off to Valentine as the Rougeaus tag in and out multiple times. Jacques finally sticks around for a bit and misses a cross body out of the corner.

Greg drops a bunch of elbows and puts on the Figure Four as Bobby Heenan comes into the commentary booth. Jacques gets to the rope before reversing a piledriver so he can tag Ray. While this is going on, Bobby and Gorilla argue about midgets. Ray puts Greg in a sleeper and Brutus' save goes awry. Valentine gets caught in the Rougeau Bomb but Dino comes in off the middle rope though with a shot to Ray's back, giving the Dream Team the pin.

Rating: C-. This was all angle rather than the match. The Rougeaus were a talented team and looked solid out there while the Dream Team looked like a relic of the past. Thankfully this would be the end for them as Bravo would replace Beefcake immediately, although the New Dream Team never went anywhere.

While there's no video of it, the Rougeaus did win the Tag Titles for one night only on August 10, 1987 in Montreal. The titles were immediately given back to the Hart Foundation but it did in fact happen.

We'll move on to a match that actually can be seen, as the Rougeaus were in the opening match at the first Summerslam. They were also heels by now with Jimmy Hart as their manager.

Fabulous Rougeaus vs. British Bulldogs

These two teams could not stand each other behind the scenes, eventually

reaching the point where the Bulldogs left the company as a result. Davey jumps Jacques to start and rams him into turnbuckle after turnbuckle to put him down. Smith throws Jacques over to Raymond for a tag in a nice display of bravado. Off to Dynamite for a quick headbutt and a slam to keep Raymond in trouble.

Off to an armbar by Dynamite Kid before Davey comes back in for one of his own. Dynamite comes back in with a wicked clothesline to take Raymond's head off. Chris Benoit idolized Dynamite and you can see so many of Benoit's moves when you watch Dynamite's matches. Davey comes in and trades some snappy rollups before it's back to Dynamite to continue cranking on the arm.

Davey comes in again but Jacques trips him up to shift control to the Canadians. It's off to some leg work now as Jacques kicks away at Davey's hamstring. The Rougeaus start tagging in and out with Ray coming in to drop some knees on the hamstring before Jacques comes back in to pull on the leg. Ray comes back in sans tag to pull on the leg before Jacques puts on a spinning toehold. Davey finally gets back up and monkey flips Ray down, allowing for the tag to Dynamite.

The Kid speeds things way up and sends Ray out to the floor, triggering a brawl between Davey and Raymond. Back inside and Davey hits the powerslam but Jacques breaks it up before a one count. Dynamite comes back in for the headbutt but Jacques drills him with a belly to back suplex for two. Off to an abdominal stretch by Jacques followed by a camel clutch from both Rougeaus. Kid fights up and rams Ray into the buckle to escape but it's right back to the abdominal stretch by Jacques.

Dynamite finally fights up again and headbutts Jacques down to bring in Davey. Jacques immediately grabs the rope to avoid a dropkick but gets caught in a gorilla press onto the top rope. Everything breaks down and Davey picks up Dynamite to launch him into a headbutt on Jacques, but the time limit expires before there can be a cover.

Rating: C+. This was a solid opener as the fans were staying hot throughout the extended rest holds. The parts with both teams brawling and getting to move around made for a much better match, but you can't do that for twenty minutes when you're going for the draw. Draws were much more commonplace back in the 80s so this was nothing that odd to see.

Since this is supposed to be about Jacques instead of the team, here's a singles match against Brutus Beefcake on December 6, 1988.

Brutus Beefcake vs. Jacques Rougeau

What an odd choice for a match, but WE GET HEEL ROUGEAU MUSIC!!!!!! Beefcake's music is pretty awesome too. From what I can tell this is at a Superstars taping in Daytona Beach, Florida. Jacques keeps breaking cleanly to prove he's a nice guy. He takes over quickly with a nice dropkick and Brutus is all confused. Thank goodness he's fine.

A high knee puts Jacques on the floor and it's time for hugs. Gay jokes abound from Mooney. Back inside (no pun intended) and Jacques takes over, hooking a camel clutch. The fans are all over Jimmy here. There's a Boston Crab which is like a fetish for French Canadians. Jimmy shows off his value, hitting Brutus in the ribs with the megaphone while he's on the floor.

He stays on the back and ribs, even hooking the abdominal stretch. Hayes complains about it since Gorilla isn't on commentary here. Brutus ducks a cross body and the fans pop big. Very hot crowd here. There's an atomic drop and Jacques sells it as it's meant to be sold. Beefcake tries a splash (odd) but catches knees. Jacques is sent into his manager and the sleeper looks to end this, but Ray Rougeau runs in for the DQ.

Rating: C. Generic but fine here. Brutus was never in any real danger but I don't get the ending. Why do they need to keep

Jacques, a tag wrestler, from losing clean? Brutus was a solid midcard guy at this point and got a lot better around this point. Not a great match or anything, but for a TV main event this would have been fine.

We'll jump ahead a few years to the Rougeaus splitting due to Ray retiring, leaving Jacques on his own. He would leave for a year before coming back as the Mountie, an evil Royal Canadian Mounted Policeman. He would debut in early 1991 and beat Tito Santana in about 90 seconds at Wrestlemania VII. Instead of that we'll look at a match that lasts more than a few seconds as Mountie fought his fellow law enforcement officer the Big Boss Man at Summerslam 1991.

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.

A few months later Mountie would shock the world by pinning Bret Hart for the Intercontinental Title at a house show in early 1992. He would have to defend the belt two days later at the 1992 Royal Rumble against Roddy Piper, losing it in pretty easy fashion. We'll take a look at the rematch from Saturday Night's Main Event XXX a few days later.

Intercontinental Title: Mountie vs. Roddy Piper

This is the rematch from the Rumble where Mountie was given the title for two days since Bret was hurt. Piper wouldn't win another WWF title for about 15 years. He's staggering around a bit so he might be a bit intoxicated. Piper is wrestling with a t-shirt on. Keep that in mind for a bit later. Apparently the winner gets Bret at Mania.

An interview with Bret says he hopes it's Piper but is happy either way. Piper changes control when he gets his knees up to block a splash. The referee gets bumped and Mountie pours water on Piper and gives him the shock stick that he was using. Naturally it has no effect and Mountie gets it, complete with ridiculous sound effects. Piper pulls off his shirt to reveal a vest saying Shock Proof in a rather infamous moment for some reason.

Rating: C. It was about the ending and to give Mountie his rematch. It worked fine so I can't complain. There's not much here but since the ending was effective I'm all fine and good with it. The shock stick stuff was very amusing and it's something that only Piper could have pulled off.

Mountie would drop down the card after this. We'll look at one more of his matches, from September 20, 1992 on Superstars.

Mountie vs. Tatanka

Mountie stalls to open things up before doing a rain dance. Some chops have no effect on Tatanka so he knocks Mountie over the top and out to the floor. We take a break and come back with Mountie still on the floor as Jimmy distracts Tatanka. Back in and an atomic drop sends Mountie out to the floor again before Tatanka goes after Hart. Jimmy trips up Tatanka but Mountie is too spent to follow up.

The fake cop stalls forever before putting Tatanka in the Tree of Woe without following up. A piledriver puts Tatanka out again but Mountie won't cover. Instead he gets on the mic and says he's the Mountie, allowing Tatanka to make his comeback with chops and a backdrop. Mountie avoids a splash and Hart gets the shock stick but Tatanka rolls away, drawing the DQ anyway.

Rating: D-. My goodness what a waste of time this was. Mountie stayed on offense for maybe two minutes and actually did stuff for about thirty seconds. The ending didn't do it any favors either, making this a total mess. Mountie wouldn't be long for the company and I'm not surprised based on this.

Jacques would leave the company for several months before returning as part of the Quebecers with Pierre Oulette, a tag team who wore the Mountie uniforms but had a theme song saying WE'RE NOT THE MOUNTIES. They would receive a Tag Title match on Raw on September 13, 1993.

Tag Titles: Quebecers vs. Steiner Brothers

This is under Province of Quebec Rules, meaning the titles can be lost by countout and disqualification, piledrivers are illegal, coming off the top is illegal and throwing people over the top is illegal. Rick and Jacques get things going with Rick hitting that powerslam/belly to belly of his and Jacques bails to the floor. Off to Pierre who gets armdragged down before Scott comes in for a butterfly powerbomb and two. A dropkick

gets two more as the champions are firmly in control to start.

Pierre finally gets away from Scott and scores with a middle rope clothesline for two of his own. Scott comes back with a backdrop and cleans house before handing it off to Rick who tries a piledriver until Scott waves him off. We take a break and come back with Rick sending Jacques through the ropes and out to the floor. Scott puts Pierre in a headlock before suplexing him down for a half crab. Rick comes back in for the same hold but Jacques breaks it up right in front of the referee for no DQ.

Rick puts the hold right back on before it's back to Scott for an armbar. Quickly back to Rick for a belly to belly suplex as Johnny (Raven) Polo comes out in a Montreal Canadiens jersey and carrying a hockey stick. Heenan: "He must be the Quebecers new manager!" Vince: "Thanks Dr. Watson." Heenan: "No problem Holmes." Rick's splash hits knees but he's still able to shove Pierre off to block a superplex. Jacques tries to interfere but hits his partner by mistake, sending the Quebecers to the floor for a meeting with Polo.

We take another break and come back with Pierre getting in a cheap shot to Scott's head from the apron. A double mat slam sends Scott's head into the canvas before Jacques slams Pierre on top of him for two. There's a double hot shot as well and Scott's wrist is caught in the ropes. Rick tries to come in for a save but it just lets Pierre choke with a tag rope. The Quebecers go high/low for two more and it's off to a chinlock from Pierre.

A Vader Bomb gets two more and it's back to Jacques with no tag. Scott kicks Jacques in the face but Pierre gets a tag and slams his partner down onto Scott instead. The referee gets us back to one on one and Scott finally scores with a DDT. Pierre draws Rick in before the tag and everything breaks down for a few moments. They settle back down with Jacques hitting an Alabama Slam on Scott, setting up a middle rope legdrop from Pierre.

Rick is tired of waiting and comes in to clean house, allowing his brother to hit a double clothesline. The hot tag finally brings in Rick but Scott stays in as well. Pierre takes the Frankensteiner for two despite Scott not being legal. Polo gets up on the apron but Rick knocks him down, sending the hockey stick into the ring. Scott takes it from Jacques and blasts him in the back, giving the Quebecers the win and the titles.

Rating: B. This took a lot of time to get going but it was rolling once they hit the formula stuff. You knew the rules would come into play at the end and there's nothing wrong with that. It was a good way to protect the Steiners as they were such an awesome team at this point and it was hard to buy any team being able to beat them fairly.

One more tag match as the Quebecers would defend the belts at Royal Rumble 1994 against Bret and Owen Hart, which was much more about the Hart Brothers' issues rather than the titles.

Tag Titles: Bret Hart/Owen Hart vs. Quebecers

The Quebecers are managed by Johnny Polo, who would change his name to Raven in ECW. Pierre and Bret start things off with the challenger taking over. Off to Owen to work on the arm with his signature spinning counter to a wristlock. Off to Jacques and they botch something, but Owen hits a quick suplex to keep things on track. An enziguri gets two for Owen and it's back to Bret.

After a bunch of rollups by Bret, everything breaks down and the Quebecers take over. Actually scratch that as Owen hits a kind of spear into a rollup for two and the Harts stand tall. It's Bret vs. Jacques with Hart in control until it's back to Owen for a gutwrench suplex for two. Bret comes back in, only to get powerslammed down by Pierre. A pair of knees to the back gets two and it's back to Jacques.

That goes nowhere so Pierre comes in to jump into a boot. Owen comes back

in and belly to bellies Jacques down before hooking the Sharpshooter. Pierre bulldogs Owen down for a fast save of course and it's back to Pierre legally. Owen dropkicks both Quebecers down and it's off to Bret again. For some reason both champions are allowed to stay in the ring for way too long. Pierre is atomic dropped to the floor, and now we get to the turning point of the match: Johnny Polo holds the ropes open to send Bret to the floor. Bret comes up holding his knee and he's in big trouble.

Pierre rams the knee into the barricade to further the damage and the match turns into a kind of sloppy brawl on the floor. Owen finally throws Bret back into the ring and the leg work begins. Jacques puts on a half crab but Owen makes a fast save. The champions load up the Cannonball (kind of an aided Swanton) but Bret rolls away. Instead of tagging though, Bret tries the Sharpshooter...and the referee stops the match for the knee injury.

Rating: B-. This is one of those matches where you can look at it in multiple ways. From a match standpoint, it's a standard tag match with the faces and heels doing exactly what they would be expected to do. On the other hand, the idea here was about setting up Owen's heel turn, and the ending does that perfectly. There was no reason for Bret to not tag at the end and it sets Owen off as it should.

The team would split in July and leave the company before reuniting in WCW. Their run there and their reunion in the WWF were both so worthless that we'll skip over them and get on to one last match. We'll close it out with a very rare match which unfortunately doesn't have a full version available. This is from April 11, 1997 and is shot on a hand held camera at an independent show (I think. I've read that it was a Rougeau show but in collaboration with WCW so it's not exactly clear) in Montreal.

Hollywood Hogan vs. Jacques Rougeau

Joined in progress with Hogan in full control and suplexing Rougeau to the ire of the crowd. A backdrop and elbow get two for Hogan but the big boot only gets one. We hit the chinlock for a bit before Hogan bites Jacques' forehead. A double clothesline puts both guys down and it's Rougeau up first with punches and a back elbow to the jaw. Jacques hits a pair of middle rope fists but Hogan ducks a cross body and drops the leg. There's a second leg but Hogan pulls up and slaps Jacques in the face. He takes a bit too long to cover though and Jacques grabs a small package for the pin out of nowhere.

Rating: D+. The five minutes or so that exist aren't great but it's still very cool to see rare stuff like this. Hogan allegedly put Rougeau over out of respect for his family which I'll take as true for lack of a better story. Naturally this was never mentioned on TV but it would have been awesome to see this live.

Jacques Rougeau was a very solid tag team wrestler who did a great job with what he was given. The Mountie character is so goofy and over the top that it's hard not to like him at least on some level. His time with his brother was probably his best period but he had a ton of success without him as well.

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