

Wrestlemania Count-Up – Wrestlemania V: Maybe The Explosion Will Wake The Crowd Up

Wrestlemania V

Date: April 2, 1989

Location: Trump Plaza, Atlantic City, New Jersey

Attendance: 18,946

Commentators: Gorilla Monsoon, Jesse Ventura

Given how this year's (2013) Wrestlemania is more or less a sequel to last year's, this is an appropriate show to get to. This is more or less the followup to Wrestlemania IV as Savage has snapped on Hogan, claiming that Hulk is jealous of the title and all that jazz. That's really all you need to know about this show as it's the only match that means anything at all. Let's get to it.

Rockin Robin, the reigning Women's Champion, sings America the Beautiful.

Hercules vs. King Haku

The crown isn't on the line here. Haku jumps him from behind to start but Herc comes back with a hip toss and a slam followed by a release flapjack. A clothesline puts Haku on the floor but Hercules suplexes him right back in. Some elbow drops keep Haku down but Hercules goes after Heenan like an idiot. Haku jumps him from behind and we head back inside for a pair of backbreakers for a pair of counts.

Since this is a power match we hit the bearhug as even Jesse says this isn't going to get a submission. Gorilla criticizes Haku's technique, prompting Jesse to ask what a gorilla would know about bearhugging. Herc breaks the hold and the King yells at the referee, only to get caught by a cross body. Hercules pounds away and hits a running knee lift followed by some clotheslines. A powerslam gets two but Hercules jumps off the top

into most of a superkick. Haku misses a top rope headbutt and Hercules wins with the belly to back suplex with a last second shoulder raise.

Rating: C-. Nothing special here but it was a basic enough match to get things going. Hercules was a generic power guy so there wasn't much to get interested in with him. Haku would join up with Andre to win the tag titles by the end of the year. I'm not sure if there was much of a feud here other than Hercules vs. Heenan which was only touched on.

The Rockers say they can handle the Twin Towers.

Rockers vs. Twin Towers

That would be Big Boss Man/Akeem. Shawn makes his Wrestlemania debut by starting against Big Boss Man and the little guy takes over quickly. He also decks Akeem in the corner and gets to face the bigger man (Akeem, the former One Man Gang). The Rockers start flying in and out of the ring as they work over Akeem's arm. The arm cranking continues but Akeem makes a blind tag. Marty gets tossed into Boss Man's arms and crushed by both big men. This is back when Boss Man weighed about 400lbs so it's a big more painful than it sounds.

The Towers take their turns with fat man offense as Marty is in big trouble in a hurry. Akeem avalanches him in the corner and it's back to Boss Man. We get heel miscommunication though and Boss Man is knocked to the floor by his own partner. Off to Shawn who pounds away in the corner before both Rockers hit a series of whips into the corner. A double middle rope shoulder finally takes Akeem down for two and it's back to Shawn on his own.

Akeem KILLS HIM with a clothesline (Jesse: "I think he irritated Akeem!") but Boss Man misses a top rope splash. The Rockers hit some double dropkicks (one of which sees Shawn completely missing Bossman) but a top rope rana is countered into a wicked powerbomb by Boss Man. Akeem crushes Shawn with a splash for the pin.

Rating: C. Considering how hungover the Rockers were in this match (as confirmed by Shawn), this came off pretty well. The Rockers sold the power offense like few others could, which made for some awesome visuals.

They would get a lot better over the coming years but this wasn't their best performance.

Ted DiBiase talks about hanging out with Donald Trump and having them here to see him beat up Beefcake.

Ted DiBiase vs. Brutus Beefcake

This isn't for the Million Dollar Title which ticks Gorilla off. Brutus has his AWESOME music at this point. Beefcake jumps DiBiase to start to tick off Jesse as well. Ted bails to the floor and comes back in for some chops, only to be knocked right back to the floor by a right hand. Back in again and Brutus wins a slugout but Virgil trips him up to give DiBiase his first control.

DiBiase pounds away (there's a lot of punching in this match) and hits the falling punch for two. I love that move. A middle rope ax handle puts Brutus down again but Beefcake reverses a suplex to put DiBiase down right next to him. A double clothesline does the exact same thing but Ted is up first. He tries another suplex which actually works this time, followed by the Million Dollar Dream.

Brutus gets to the rope so they slug it out some more with the barber taking over. Now Beefcake throws on his own sleeper but gets sent out to the floor in a counter. Virgil interferes a bit to distract Beefcake but DiBiase stupidly goes out to the floor as well. They brawl to a double countout to a big boo from the crowd.

Rating: C-. This was mainly a punching match as well as a pretty big fall for DiBiase. To go from the main event to the third match on the card in a year is a pretty big fall, which is saying a lot as DiBiase was still a very evil heel. Brutus was getting very popular very fast and would be paired with Hogan soon after this for a BIG rub.

Brutus beats up Virgil post match and chases them off with the hedge clippers. You know, assault with a deadly weapon as Jesse calls it.

We go to the Wrestlemania brunch with the Bushwhackers eating a lot and trying to talk about their match with the Rougeaus.

Bushwhackers vs. Fabulous Rougeau Brothers

ALL AMERICAN BOYS BABY! That would be the Rougeau's theme song and one of the most awesome entrances in company history. Seriously, go Youtube that thing. Jimmy Hart loses his jacket somehow but the Rougeaus save it in a humane act. Not that it matters as the Bushwhackers clear the ring a second later. Luke and Ray start things off and Ray quickly takes him down. I turn my head for a minute and come back to hearing Jesse say "So as far as you're concerned, tear down the Statue of Liberty?" Like I said, commentary was a bit different back then.

Luke and Butch clear the ring of Rougeaus again before it's down to Luke and Jacques. Butch tries to interfere for no apparent reason and Luke gets caught in a Boston Crab. In a sequence that has haunted me for years, Ray loads up Luke for a slam and while Luke is upside down, he rubs Ray's crotch. There's nothing more to it than that and to this day I don't know why he did that.

Anyway Ray puts on an abdominal stretch as a fan or two chants USA. In theory that would be for the Rougeaus here who are the All American Boys facing the guys from New Zealand. The Rougeaus prematurely hug and get caught by the Battering Ram and a double gutbuster is good for the pin on Ray out of nowhere.

Rating: D. It's a comedy match and not a very fun one. This is called a big upset but I don't really see how you can call it that. It's not like either team is great or even good here and the Bushwhackers were still brand new here, so presumably they had won most of their matches up to this point. I don't get it but whatever.

Sean Mooney is licked by the Bushwhackers and says words can't describe it. As someone who has been licked by one as well, that's very true.

Mr. Perfect vs. Blue Blazer

That would be Owen Hart in a kind of superhero gimmick that eventually led to his death. Perfect is pretty new here too and I believe is debuting his singlet look. Hennig hits a quick hiptoss that doesn't do much at all. Blazer blocks a slap and takes Perfect down to stagger

Hennig a bit.

They slightly botch a flip out of a hiptoss and Blazer dropkicks Perfect to the floor. Blazer hits a quick hiptoss (why is that so popular here?) of his own and a dropkick for no cover. A modified northern lights suplex gets two for Blue but a top rope splash hits knees. Off to a reverse chinlock for a few moments by Perfect but Blazer fights up and hits a standing powerslam and a belly to belly for two each. A crucifix gets two more but Blazer spends too long arguing with the referee and the PerfectPlex ends this clean.

Rating: C+. This match is popular for some reason but it's only pretty good. Owen would get to show off a lot better later on and the Blazer gimmick didn't stick around that long. The ending here was clean too which is what Perfect would get quite often around this time. He wouldn't really do anything of note for about a year though until having a house show feud with Hogan.

Jesse is presented to the crowd again like last year.

Mr. Fuji allegedly runs a 5K run in a tuxedo.

To really make this show feel bloated, here's Run DMC with the Wrestlemania Rap.

We recap the double tag team turn at Survivor Series 1988 with Fuji leaving Demolition to hook up with the Powers of Pain.

Demolition says they're ready for Fuj the Stooge.

Tag Titles: Demolition vs. Powers of Pain/Mr. Fuji

Demolition is defending and this is a handicap match. Warlord and Ax get things going with Ax pounding him down quickly. Smash comes in for a double beatdown and it's off to a neck crank. Back to Ax for the same move and he yells at Fuji a bit. The Demolition beatdown ensues but Warlord powers Ax over to the corner for a tag to Barbarian. He shoves Smash into the corner and is immediately clotheslined down by a fresh Ax. The crowd is dead here.

Barbie gets double teamed by the champions and Ax hooks a neck crank. Back to Smash who gets chopped down before it's back to Warlord. The advantage lasts for all of three seconds before the Powers finally get some successful cheating going on. Off to Fuji for the first time for some old man offense that is far better than Heenan or Hart at least. Barbarian comes in again and the yet to be named Kick of Fear puts Ax down again for no cover.

The match continues to stay in second gear at best with both teams barely moving at all. Fuji tries the flashiest move of the match by going up top, only to miss Ax. Gorilla: "He hasn't wrestled in years, just like us." Jesse: "Us? For Fuji and I it's been years. For you many years." Barbarian gets clotheslined down again and it's off to Smash as everything breaks down. Fuji loads up his salt but hits Warlord by mistake. The Demolition Decapitator is enough to end Fuji and retain the titles.

Rating: D. I'm a fan of Demolition but this was a REALLY weak performance by both teams. The Powers would split soon after this which was the best idea for both guys as they were never going to break through the ceiling with Demolition on top. The title reign would continue to go on for another two months or so, reaching at nearly a year and a half.

Randy Savage has nothing to say other than he's ready for Hogan.

Ronnie Garvin vs. Dino Bravo

For absolutely no apparent reason, Jimmy Snuka is brought out after the wrestlers' intros. Bravo jumps him from behind to open the match before it's off to a bearhug. That goes about three seconds do Dino loads up a powerbomb instead. Garvin escapes and starts a flurry of offense and gets two off a jackknife cover. A sleeper is easily broken up by Bravo and he breaks up a piledriver as well. Garvin tries to pound away in the corner but gets caught in an atomic drop and the side suplex for the pin by Bravo.

Rating: D. This didn't do anything to get the crowd going which is a big problem with this show: the crowd doesn't care about most of this stuff and why in the world would they? This is a random match between two guys

that have no reason to fight and have no future as a main talent. Nothing to see here at all.

Frenchy Martin, Dino's manager, gets beaten down by Garvin post match just because.

Brain Busters vs. Strike Force

This is the return of Strike Force after Martel had a bad injury. Blanchard and Martel start things off and Rick almost immediately has to punch out of the wrong corner. Off to Anderson who gets rammed face first into the mat before being put in his own test of strength on the mat. Arn catches Martel in a body scissors but Rick turns it over into his signature Boston Crab.

Blanchard makes the save but Tito immediately comes in to put him in the Figure Four. Martel puts one on Anderson as well as things break down. We get some near falls by Tito but he accidentally hits the forearm on Martel to take him out. Rick gets ticked off as Tito is basically in a handicap match. The Busters get to take over on Tito but you know Santana can hang with either guy.

Arn goes up but gets slammed down, allowing Tito to set up a hot tag to...no one. Martel drops down to the floor and walks out on his partner, officially making it a handicap match. The yet to be named spinebuster from Anderson plants Tito and it's back to Blanchard. Tully blocks a monkey flip and the spike piledriver kills Tito dead for the pin.

Rating: B-. Best match of the night so far as all four guys were moving out there. Tito could go with the best of them and he had some of the best of them to do that with in this one. Martel and Santana would feud on and off for about a year until they just stopped fighting out of nowhere.

Martel says he's tired of carrying Tito and that's that.

It's time for the return of Roddy Piper in Piper's Pit, but after a long introduction by Fink, we get Brother Love in a kilt instead. You younguns might know him as Bruce Prichard from Gut Check. Love interviews

“himself” and does one heck of a Roddy Piper impression in the process. Morton Downey Jr., a kind of forefather to Jerry Springer, is the actual guest. He runs to the ring and immediately lights up a cigarette and gay jokes abound about Love.

Now the real Piper comes out to make fun of Love for being feminine. Roddy won't let Love answer any questions by saying he doesn't really want to know that badly. Morton is on his fifth cigarette or so at this point. This goes on FOREVER until Love says he's a bit Scotch. You know, as in from Scotland. Piper rips off Love's kilt and the Brother sprints off. Finally we get to Downey who implies he slept with Piper's mom.

Morton keeps blowing smoke in Piper's face as Piper makes fun of Downey for having warts on his face. Piper gets annoyed with the smoke and Downey calls him a transvestite. Roddy asks for a smoke of his own and sprays Downey with a fire extinguisher. This took FIFTEEN MINUTES, as in longer than all but the main event tonight.

We get an ad for No Holds Barred, Hogan's acting debut.

Donald Trump likes hosting Wrestlemania.

Ventura goes into a hilarious rant against Hogan for invading Hollywood because Hogan needs a job after Savage beats him tonight. Jesse shouts that Hulk can drive his limo and storms off.

We recap the Megapowers feud as intermission continues. Basically Savage won the title at Mania 4 then teamed up with Hogan. Hogan kept getting the pins and finally at Main Event II, Savage accidentally wiped out Elizabeth. Hogan took Liz to the back to get attention but it left Savage alone. Finally Savage slapped Hogan and turned heel again, leading to the heel promo of a lifetime as he ERUPTED on Hogan, letting out every bit of his pent up rage and jealousy before blasting Hogan with the title in the medical room.

Hogan says it was Savage eaten alive by the jealousy and the title is coming home tonight. This somehow turns into a talk about destroying the Trump Plaza, which I think he touched on last year too.

Andre the Giant vs. Jake Roberts

Big John Studd is referee and comes out to what would become Jim Duggan's music. This was supposed to set up Andre vs. Studd but Studd left before it went anywhere. Sometime before the match, Andre and Heenan get the turnbuckle pad off and Jake goes face first into the steel. Ventura and Gorilla talk about David vs. Goliath (Jesse: "He used a foreign object.") as Jake reaches for the snake bag. That goes nowhere so Studd crushes him in the corner.

Andre looks so different than he did two years ago. In Detroit he looked like a killing machine but here he looks like a lumbering oaf. Giant steps on Jake a few times but Roberts comes back with some strikes. He knocks Andre into the ropes and chokes away, only to see Andre get his arm loose and choke Jake right back.

In a moment that I've never seen explained, Andre fires some shoulders into Jake in the corner, only to stagger backwards. I'm guessing Jake was supposed to knee him (the announcers suggested he did) but Jake's legs never moved. Either way, Roberts pounds away a bit before being knocked to the floor. Studd and Andre get in a shoving match as Ted DiBiase runs out to steal the snake. Andre chokes Studd until Jake chases DiBiase down and gets the snake back. He slides Damien in and the giant runs from the smaller referee giant, giving Jake the DQ win.

Rating: D. ANOTHER match that didn't go anywhere here as it was hard to buy Jake as being a threat to Andre while at the same time it was hard to be intimidated by the Giant due to how old and banged up he was. Nothing match here which was supposed to set up Andre vs. Studd, but instead Studd retired so Andre got a tag title reign instead.

Sensational Sherri wants to fight Rockin Robin and hopes Liz gets hurt today.

Greg Valentine/Honky Tonk Man vs. Hart Foundation

Valentine and Honky aren't Rhythm and Blues yet. Bret and Honky start and it's atomic drops all around. Honky sells his hilariously but Greg plays it a bit more serious. Off to Anvil for some power but Bret misses the

middle rope elbow. The beating begins and you know Hart is going to sell things very well. Valentine gets to pound away as Gorilla says Greg isn't warmed up yet.

Honky hits the Shake Rattle and Roll but tags in Valentine for the Figure Four instead. Greg gets rolled up for two instead as Gorilla goes NUTS complaining about Honky not covering. The hot tag brings in Anvil again to clean house on both heels. A great clothesline gets two on the Hammer before it's back to Bret for the middle rope elbow. Everything breaks down and Bret gets Jimmy Hart's megaphon to drill Honky for the pin.

Rating: D+. Enough filler matches already! This is probably the fourth match out of ten so far that have been there with no particular reason for it to happen. The show is already well over two and a half hours now and there are still four matches to go. That's one of the problems with the late 80s: they made the shows long for the sake of having them be long.

We recap Rude vs. Warrior which is basically just because Rude attacked Warrior at the Rumble Super Posedown and the champion wants revenge.

Intercontinental Title: Ultimate Warrior vs. Rick Rude

Warrior is defending but Rude has the belt imprinted on his tights. Rude tries a knee to the ribs but hits the belt by mistake. Warrior immediately takes over with the power game and LAUNCHES Rude into the corner. The champ throws on a bearhug for a bit until Rude finally pokes him in the eyes to escape. Rude busts out a MISSILE DROPKICK for two but gets launched off Warrior on the kickout.

Back to the bearhug but Rude gets out the same way as he did the first time. Warrior responds by biting Rude in the face but the splash hits knees. A piledriver puts Warrior down but Rick can't immediately cover. It only gets two but the kickout is much weaker than earlier. Rude tries to swivel his hips but his back is too messed up. He cranks back on Warrior's arms but the champion gets to the ropes and starts shaking away.

Here come the shoulders from Warrior and he plants Rude face first into

the mat a few times. Warrior tries a slam or something but drops Rude and almost puts him on the floor. Rude gets a boot up in the corner to stop a charging Warrior but the Rude Awakening is broken through pure power. Rick is clotheslined to the floor and Warrior suplexes him back in, only to have Heenan trip Warrior up and hold down his foot for the shocking upset and the title to Rude. This might have been Warrior's first televised loss but I don't think it was.

Rating: B. This is one of those pairings that just worked no matter what you had them do. You often hear about people having chemistry and that's what you had here: these two could just work well together for no apparent reason and this is a fine example. Warrior would get the title back later in the year before moving to the world title scene a few months later. Good match here.

Warrior beats up Heenan post match. Remember that for later.

Bad News Brown vs. Jim Duggan

This show MUST continue! Again no reason to this match and they're just fighting to fill in another five minutes on this already WAY too long card. They punch each other a lot and Duggan knocks him to the floor. Brown comes back in with his judo stuff but misses the Ghetto Blaster (running enziguri). Bad News gets annoyed and goes to the floor for a chair but Duggan hits it with the board for the double DQ.

Rating: D-. This is the twelfth match on this show and we're over three hours and three minutes into it already. There is no reason at all for this to be continuing but it is anyway just because. Duggan would go on to feud with whoever he could find as would Brown, showing why this match didn't need to happen at all.

Red Rooster says he'll beat Heenan and it'll be a great day in the barnyard.

Red Rooster vs. Bobby Heenan

There's actually a backstory: Heenan managed Rooster but said he was limited so Rooster dumped Heenan. Bobby is hurt so he brings the Brooklyn

Brawler with him. Those sentences take as long to type as the match lasts as Rooster hits him once, Heenan misses a charge into the post, gets whipped into the buckle and the match is over in 30 seconds. To recap, Rooster beat him with an Irish whip.

Just to drag this out EVEN LONGER, the Brawler beats the Rooster up, because WE HAVE TO PUSH BROOKLN FREAKING BRAWLER.

Liz says she'll be in a neutral corner tonight and won't cheer for either guy in the main event.

Tony Schiavone and Sean Mooney fill in even MORE time.

WWF World Title: Hulk Hogan vs. Randy Savage

This is huge and Savage is on fire here. As I said Liz is in a neutral corner despite never being Hogan's manager as a singles guy ever. Savage comes out first for no apparent reason. Savage immediately heads to the floor to stall as you would expect him to do. The fans HATE him at this point after loving him like crazy a year earlier. Hogan finally shoves Savage down and it's time to stall some more.

Back up and Hogan shoulders him down again for the third trip to the floor for Savage. As Jesse and Gorilla get in an argument over the value of managers, Savage grabs a headlock. Hulk shoves him off and Randy heads outside, only to hide behind Liz in a truly evil move. Back in again and Hogan actually uses a nice amateur move and hooks a front facelock. That wasn't bad at all. Savage powers out of it (surprising as well) and pokes Hogan in the eye to take over.

A top rope ax handle gets one on Hogan and it's off to an armbar. In something you don't often see, Hogan is pulled down to the mat by his hair. It feels weird even typing that. Hulk uses a handful of trunks to launch Randy out to the floor and Jesse freaks out. Back in and a clothesline puts Randy down, followed by a series of elbow drops. Hulk is bleeding above the eye.

Randy gets in a shot to the face and puts on a fast sleeper which is transitioned into a chinlock. Hulk comes back with an atomic drop but an

elbow drop misses. A shot into the buckle sets up a rollup with trunks for two on Hulk. Savage stomps on his fingers which ticks Hogan off. Hogan slams Savage to the floor where the champion doesn't want Liz's help. Hulk follows him out and rams Randy's face into the barricade.

Savage escapes being posted and sends Hogan in by mistake. After sending Hulk back in, Randy yells at Liz a bit more and shoves her up the aisle. The referee ejects Liz, making the only interesting factor a nonfactor. Back to the floor and Savage drops the ax handle off the top to send Hogan throat first into the barricade. Savage goes after the throat with various evil measures but the elbow only gets two. Hulk Up, big boot, leg drop, new champion.

Rating: B-. It's Hogan vs. Savage so these two are always going to have at least a watchable match, but at the end of the day this was pretty much designed to be a Hogan win and that's what it wound up being. The smart move would be to have Savage keep the title by DQ or something, causing Hulk to chase the title until Summerslam for the title change. But instead we go with the easy (and not horrible) ending. It's a good match here but not great.

Hogan celebrates forever to end the show.

Overall Rating: D. This was pretty terrible. The main words you probably heard me say in here were things like "it keeps going" or "filler". That's the problem with this show: there's WAY too much stuff going on with 14 matches, that stupid rap, and the fifteen minute Piper segment. This show runs nearly three hours and forty minutes which is WAY too much for a single show given what they had going on at this point. Probably five matches at minimum could be called filler here. That's WAY too much and I can see why this is considered such a lame show.

Ratings Comparison

Hercules vs. King Haku

Original: C-

Redo: C-

Twin Towers vs. Rockers

Original: C

Redo: C

Brutus Beefcake vs. Ted DiBiase

Original: D+

Redo: C-

Bushwhackers vs. Fabulous Rougeau Brothers

Original: D-

Redo: D

Mr. Perfect vs. Blue Blazer

Original: B-

Redo: C+

Demolition vs. Powers of Pain/Mr. Fuji

Original: C-

Redo: D

Dino Bravo vs. Ronnie Garvin

Original: F

Redo: D

Brain Busters vs. Strike Force

Original: B-

Redo: B-

Jake Roberts vs. Andre the Giant

Original: D

Redo: D

Hart Foundation vs. Honky Tonk Man/Greg Valentine

Original: D+

Redo: D+

Rick Rude vs. Ultimate Warrior

Original: B

Redo: B

Jim Duggan vs. Bad News Brown

Original: F

Redo: D-

Red Rooster vs. Brooklyn Brawler

Original: N/A

Redo: N/A

Hulk Hogan vs. Randy Savage

Original: C+

Redo: B-

Overall Rating

Original: D+

Redo: D

Wow that was a rather boring redo.

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/03/12/history-of-wrestlemania-with-kb-wrestlemania-5-hogan-vs-savage-and-thats-about-it/>

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book of on the History of Summerslam at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

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