

Wrestler of the Day – July 31: Jonathan Coachman

Back to commentary with Jonathan Coachman. Yes he did wrestle.

Coach would start his in ring career in late 2003, including a match on Raw, September 1, 2003.

Jerry Lawler vs. Jonathan Coachman

We're in Louisiana so Coach is wearing a University of Texas jersey. Lawler scores with an early right hand to stop a dancing Coach. Back up and Coach cranks on a headlock but is easily slammed down. Cue Coach's Heat commentary partner Al Snow who says Coach is in over his head. Back in and Lawler puts on an armbar, so Snow offers to throw in the towel for him. Snow gets Jerry to let go but Coach gets in Snow's face. Jerry goes outside and of course Snow is evil, sending Lawler into the post and giving Coach the easy pin. I won't bother rating this due to the time outside, but it was nothing special and only setting stuff up.

Here's Coach's PPV debut at Unforgiven 2003. It's the fallout from the previous match and for the right to call Monday Night Raw.

Jim Ross/Jerry Lawler vs. Al Snow/Jonathan Coachman

The winner to do the announcing for Raw. Yes, they asked people to pay \$34.95 for this. There's no commentary for this. I think I can get by without the extra jokes somehow. The wrestlers start and Lawler kind of botches a rollup. Ok then. The lack of commentary is weird here but then again I'm watching Ross and Coach on PPV. You can hear them shouting at each other a lot better which is weird to hear.

That might be Ross' big mouth though so there we are. Snow

“hits” a clothesline and I say that in the weakest sense of the word hit. Snow, being younger and better at this point, dominates as we’re just waiting on the other guys to come in and make it a comedy match. Coach is the team captain apparently. Oh dear. There’s the piledriver on Snow and JR does commentary from the apron. The foot gets to the ropes but Snow sold that like he had an anvil fall on his head so I can’t complain there.

And it’s Coach time, which has even Snow wondering what the heck he’s doing. As usual, Lawler’s offense is shall we say limited? The middle rope punch hits but Snow makes the save. Ross gets a blind tag and the referee is fine with it I guess. He beats up Coach for awhile and I see why he stayed in the booth for his career.

Coach keeps shouting not in the face which is funny. And here’s Jericho to kick Ross in the head and let Coach and Snow become the Raw announcers tomorrow. Ross would beat Coach in 8 days to get the sanity back. Jericho says this is to get back at Austin for no apparent reason.

Rating: F. Seriously, do I need to explain why this going on for 8 minutes was a bad idea? It was mainly Al Snow vs. Jerry Lawler and someone thought this was a good idea. Here’s the thing: no one really cares about announcers in a national company. Wait scratch that. They do care about them, but only the way they sound. We don’t want to see them in the ring other than a once a year match from Lawler in Memphis. That’s it. Now stop doing this nonsense.

Time for JR to try his luck in a Country Whipping match on Raw, September 29, 2003.

Jim Ross vs. Jonathan Coachman

Before the match, Chris Jericho comes out and joins Al Snow on commentary. Coach gets in an argument with a fan, allowing Ross to get in the first whip. Back in and Coach whips Ross

for awhile as this just kind of keeps going. JR finally nails a low blow and whips Coach's back. There goes the shirt so Jim can whip bare skin. Eric Bischoff tries to come in to no avail, allowing Ross to Stun Coach for the pin.

Rating: D. Even for a match between commentators, there was no way this was going to be good. That being said, at least the Stunner wasn't terrible. I'm still not sure who thought a battle over who would call Raw was an interesting story, but 2003 never was the most well thought out year for wrestling.

We'll jump ahead to January 26, 2004 on Raw for a handicap match.

Goldberg vs. Jonathan Coachman/Mark Henry

No DQ as per someone decision. Henry starts of course and shoves Goldberg down with relative ease. Back up and Goldberg fakes him out by offering to hit the ropes before just nailing Henry with a clothesline. Mark pops to his feet and crushes Goldberg in the corner with a splash. We hit the bearhug for a few moments before Goldberg easily breaks the hold and powerslams Henry down. Now it's Coach's turn for the two move combination and the easy pin.

Rating: D. Were you really expecting anything else here? You don't need a story for something like this as it was all dominance by Goldberg with Henry just there as a hurdle for Goldberg to get over before he can rip into Coach. I'd assume Henry vs. Goldberg was coming in the next few weeks.

Coach would actually get a pay per view match at Backlash 2004.

Jonathan Coachman vs. Tajiri

You read that right. Tajiri misted Coach a few weeks ago, then Coach cost Tajiri a match against Christian. Coach armdrags him down to start and Tajiri isn't sure what to make of that.

Coach keeps trying to tie him up but Tajiri keeps firing away kicks. They go to the floor and Tajiri kicks the post to change the flow of the match. Back in and Coach cannonballs down onto the leg and Tajiri is in trouble. Coach hooks a leg bar but Tajiri reverses into a kind of half crab which is pretty quickly broken up.

The leg bar goes on again so Tajiri kicks him in the back. Another to the face and the hold is finally broken up. Coach goes up and gets crotched, allowing a baseball slide dropkick to the back of the head to connect. Handspring elbow sets up another dropkick and it's rapid fire strike time. Coach grabs a cheating rollup for two. Like an idiot, Coach charges at Tajiri in the corner and is put in the Tarantula for his efforts. Garrison Cade comes out and distracts Tajiri for no apparent reason and Coach rolls him up for the pin.

Rating: D+. You know, this wasn't half bad. There's no reason for it to be on PPV, but the match wasn't all that bad. Coach kept it simple by going after the legs which is the best thing to do against a martial artist so I can't fault him there. The ending was stupid but this was such a big surprise that it wasn't a big deal.

And another one at Bad Blood 2004.

Coach vs. Eugene

I think I smell a comedy match. Eugene's song is so completely catchy that I'm going to have it in my head all night now. We get a massive Eugene chant. See what I mean? The guy was OVER. JR pushes home the idea that we all grew up wrestling fans and how cool it would be to get to wrestle someday on PPV. How can you not love that?

The fact that he really was a talented technical wrestler (in OVW he more or less wrestled the exact same style Benoit did and made it work perfectly well. The guy can go in the ring.) made it even better because it was actually believable that he

was just imitating what he had seen over the years. Yes, I was a huge Eugene mark and still am for his old stuff.

In a funny spot Coach tries to shake his hand and gets brought to his knees by Eugene's strength. In a unique spot, Eugene goes for a monkey flip and then locks his legs around his arms to make himself into a little ball. Coach rolls him around for a bit and then as he's yelling at Eugene, Eugene pops his arm up, grabs Coach and flips him over with his legs for a rollup. It sounds stupid but that was awesome. I'm laughing my head off at this.

The fans start another Eugene chant to answer why he's on this show. There's nothing wrong with a comedy character. We get a criss cross and Eugene hits the floor and gets a teddy bear from the hot chick I mentioned earlier. Coach apparently doesn't realize Eugene is gone for about 30 seconds.

Apparently he didn't notice the overly large man at ringside in incredibly small electric blue tights hugging a stuffed bear, but then again I'm no coach. Anyone fighting Eugene had such an easy time getting heat. THEY'RE HITTING A DISABLED GUY. And a random hot chick in a bikini brings out a plate of cookies.

Coach, who called the girl out, slams Eugene into the cookies. Coach slams Eugene into the turnbuckle, and it's time. Eugene Hulks Up, but here's Garrison (Lance) Cade for the interference. He rips the bear from earlier in half and Coach jumps the distracted Eugene. It doesn't work though and a Rock Bottom and People's Elbow ends this. Cade gets an awful Stunner after it. Regal comes out to congratulate him and Coach takes a somewhat better but still terrible Stunner.

Rating: B+. If anyone agrees here I'll be shocked. I know it's stupid but I love this guy. When he stays in comedy territory, it's just a fun character and it works every time for me. Like I said, few are going to agree and I don't care. Then they had

to screw everything up by making him serious because WWE.

One more from Vengeance 2004.

Tajiri/Rhyno vs. Jonathan Coachman/Garrison Cade

Uh...yeah. Seriously how do I even talk about this? This is like an opener on Heat, but a bad one. This was announced on Heat. Seriously, what was the thought on this? To my great shock and awe, this has a backstory. For no apparent reason Eugene was made GM of Raw for a night and had a game of musical chairs for a title match. Tajiri was eliminated first and Coach got the last seat. This fell out of that.

Tajiri is actually popular. Coach wisely runs from Rhyno. I've never seen the appeal of Cade. The guy just isn't that good and that's all there is to it. Oh look: Rhyno vs. Garrison Cade on Pay Per View. Coach and Cade beat up Tajiri. Again, is there a reason this is happening? I mean was there NOTHING else to try?

After even more boring as all goodness stuff, we get green mist from Tajiri to Cade. Apparently the referee seeing green stuff on Cade's formerly blonde hair is perfectly fine. This is making my head hurt and I'm not even fifteen minutes into it. Cade gets gored, Coach gets kicked and I need a stiff drink.

Rating: D. This was a glorified squash and it was just boring as heck. Tajiri was always good for some stuff, but Cade and Coach? Really? That's the best you can come up with? This was one of the dumbest openers of all time and it's also one of the least interesting. I mean just think about it: Tajiri and Rhyno vs. Garrison Cade and Jonathan Coachman. Think about that for a minute.

Back to Raw on August 30, 2004.

Rhyno/Tajiri vs. La Resistance/Coach

Rob Conway (who, as of this writing on December 17, 2013, is the NWA World Champion of all people) pounds on Rhyno to start before it's off to Sylvan Grenier for some neck cranking. The French Canadian tag champions hold Rhyno for a slip from Coach for two as this is already boring. Back to Grenier for a chinlock until Rhyno fights up and makes his comeback with clotheslines. Tajiri keeps getting kicked off the apron to keep him out as Rhyno Gores Coach down. Rhyno walks into Au Revoir (spinning suplex/side slam combo) for the pin.

Rating: D-. Oh my goodness how bad was the tag division at this point? I'm assuming Tajiri was injured or something here as he never came in at all. The match was really dull stuff with La Resistance being one of the least interesting multiple time champions ever and having no opponents of note at all. Terribly uninteresting match.

Another Raw, this time on November 15, 2004.

Randy Orton vs. Jonathan Coachman

Coach immediately heads outside but Orton catches him in the crowd as the music is still playing. They head inside and the beating is already on with Coach getting crotched on the top rope. A bit right hand sets up the RK0 for the easy pin.

One last pay per view, with Coach competing against a replacement at Taboo Tuesday 2005.

Batista vs. Jonathan Coachman

Vader and Goldust are just with Coach here and aren't actual participants. Vader is embarrassingly fat here. The street fight breaks 90% which is relatively low all things considered. Batista is Smackdown Champion here as if we needed any more assurance of the destruction here. The lackeys are in the ring too but it's not like it really matters. This is back when Batista is still one of the hottest things in the world and just a freaking machine.

Goldust gets a kendo stick and beats up Big Dave with it and coach grabs a belt from the timekeeper. Batista gets loose after being whipped and it's whipping time all over again as Batista of course destroys everything in sight, even managing what was supposed to be a spinebuster on Vader but he's just too fat. Batista gets him up the second time though and it's decent considering the size of that fat. Batista Bomb kills Coach to end it.

Rating: N/A. Given one week to set this up, this was about as good as it was going to get. Batista is no Austin, but then again who is? At least they got a big star to fill in which is as nice as they could have done. This was all on Austin and WWE did what they could for once, which is a very rare sight for them.

Off to the Middle East for a match at Tribute to the Troops 2005.

Intercontinental Title: Ric Flair vs. Jonathan Coachman

Coach actually elbows him down and stomps away before choking with a shirt. Flair pops up and takes Coach over with a snapmare. He drops the knee and kicks Coach low before putting on the Figure Four for the fast pin.

DX was feuding with Vince McMahon in 2006 so here's Coach as a sacrifice.

Shawn Michaels vs. Jonathan Coachman

Shawn puts on a HHH skull cap to start before slowly punching him in the corner. There go Coach's pants and Shawn follows up with an atomic drop. Shawn drops the top rope elbow but the Spirit Squad comes in...not for the DQ. Instead there's Sweet Chin Music to Coach but Umaga comes in for the real DQ. Not enough to rate but it was an angle instead of a match.

What would a Wrestler of the Day be without a Cena match? From

September 24, 2007 on Raw.

John Cena vs. Jonathan Coachman

Tables match. Coach is in a suit after trying to get Cena to relinquish the WWE Title. Vince said not so fast and made a tables match. Cena punches him down and loads up an AA but changes his mind. Instead he puts Coach in the STF and then the AA through the table ends this.

One more time, from November 2, 2007 on Smackdown.

Mick Foley vs. Jonathan Coachman

There's also a special referee in the form of Mr. McMahon. Hornswoggle sneaks into the ring for some reason...oh I get it. Mr. Hornswoggle McMahon is guest referee. The referee beats up Coach in the corner before Foley adds in some shots of his own. Socko knocks Coach out and the Tadpole Splash gives Foley the pin. Comedy stuff.

Coach falls into the category of "big mouth who is fun to beat up." There's nothing to the matches of course but there wasn't supposed to be. He's a comedy character and little more than that, so why try doing anything other than just having him get beaten up time after time?

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