

Survivor Series Count-Up – 2007: Feud of the Year

Survivor Series 2007

Date: November 18, 2007

Location: American Airlines Arena, Miami, Florida

Attendance: 12,500

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Jerry Lawler, Jim Ross, Tazz, Joey Styles

This is one of those shows where there's a little bit of something good and a little bit of something bad. First the bad: there's Hornswoggle vs. Great Khali. The good though is Batista vs. the Undertaker inside the Cell, which almost has to be almost has to be good. Other than that the card looks fine and we've got Shawn in a world title match which is almost guaranteed to be at least decent. Let's get to it.

The opening video talks about how this started twenty years ago, as you would expect it to. It also talks about the main event matches tonight, as you would expect it to as well.

ECW Title: CM Punk vs. John Morrison vs. The Miz

Punk is defending and Miz and Morrison are tag champions. The tag champions of course jump at the same time because one on one, neither have a chance to beat Punk. Punk kicks the tar out of Miz's head and gets a quick two on Morrison. Both tag champions are sent to the floor where Punk takes both of them out with a suicide dive. Back in and Punk gets caught in a double suplex after the springboard clothesline fails.

Miz and Morrison double team Punk but Miz is the first of the heels to go extra heel, dumping Morrison out to the floor. He hooks a chinlock on Punk but has to let go to knock Morrison back to the outside. Punk kicks Miz in the head but Morrison comes back in with a backbreaker to the champ (as in the ECW Champ) followed by a cobra clutch (called a Japanese sleeper by Joey Styles because he likes to sound smarter than he actually is).

Miz pulls Punk to the floor and rams him into the concrete to get us down to the tag champions fighting. Morrison sends him into the corner chest first and hits the yet to be named Starship Pain for two. Punk comes back in and rana Morrison off the top into a powerbomb from Miz in a SWEET looking move. That only gets two but it got a BIG reaction from the crowd.

With Morrison pretty much dead, Punk kicks Miz in the face for two and hits the knee/bulldog combo for the same. Punk hits a backbreaker on Miz but Morrison grabs a rollup and trunks on the champ for two. Morrison escapes the GTS but gets knocked to the floor, allowing Punk to hit the GTS on Miz for the pin to retain.

Rating: C. Other than that rana/powerbomb spot, this was only ok. Punk had to carry the whole thing, but you could see something special in Miz. It's a little easier to see it now, but a buddy of mine said that he thought Miz would be the bigger deal because of this match. I'm not sure if I'd agree based on this match, but Miz did indeed look better than Morrison here. This was a pretty good choice for an opener, but the execution wasn't great because Punk didn't have enough to work with.

We recap MVP turning on Matt Hardy and taking out his knee. They had been partners for awhile before this but everyone thought MVP was evil the whole time, and this was the not very shocking turn.

MVP says that Matt won't be competing tonight because he needs crutches to get by. That doesn't surprise MVP, because Matt has always needed a crutch, be it either Jeff or MVP. Oh and he's better than Matt.

Mickie James/Maria/Torrie Wilson/Michelle McCool/Kelly Kelly vs. Beth Phoenix/Melina/Jillian Hall/Victoria/Layla

One fall to a finish here and Beth is Women's Champion. The Divas Title doesn't exist yet which is how things should have stayed. Layla is WAY hotter being evil and Melina has some gorgeous hair. She also falls off the apron during her splits entrance which is worth a chuckle. The second attempt works and thankfully she's smiling after screwing it up. Mickie and Maria are ridiculously good looking as well.

Victoria and Michelle start things off with Michelle taking over with a headlock. A big boot puts Victoria (Tara in TNA if you're new at this) down and it's off to Torrie who can't wrestle a watchable match to save her life. Victoria kills her mostly dead with a side slam and it's off to Layla who is so bad here that she can't even beat up Torrie. Kelly and Jillian come in and Jillian tries to scream a bit, only to get rolled up for two. Maria comes in, basically wearing a bikini.

Thankfully Beth comes in to flatten Maria before handing it right back to Layla. Actually make that Melina, who misses a charge at Maria and crotches herself, allowing for the hot tag to Mickie. James beats up everyone in sight, has her partners take out Beth, and hits the Long Kiss Goodnight on Melina for the pin. What's the Long Kiss Goodnight you ask? That would be every 13 year old's dream: Mickie literally bends Melina back and kisses her before kicking her in the head for the pin.

Rating: D. Yes, the match sucked. Yes, most of the women in this are horrible wrestlers. Yes, if you're complaining about these things, you're missing the point. This was pure fan service as you had ten girls in either tight or barely there outfits and one hot woman kissing another hot woman before kicking her in the head. If you're looking for a wrestling match here, you're in the wrong place.

Coach and Regal are in the back looking smug. Hornswoggle, who is Vince's son at this point, is pacing very nervously. Remember that he faces Khali tonight.

Orton says history isn't going to be made tonight. He's going to beat Shawn because if Shawn uses the superkick, Shawn loses the match.

Shawn is here for revenge tonight because Orton has tried to hurt him and take his livelihood. Therefore tonight, Shawn is going to take the title.

Raw Tag Titles: Lance Cade/Trevor Murdoch vs. Hardcore Holly/Cody Rhodes

Cade and Murdoch are defending. Rhodes is brand new at this point and spent weeks getting beaten up by Holly before Holly respected him enough to team with him. Cody and Cade start things off with the rookie getting hiptossed down. The crowd pretty much died as soon as the bell rang,

which should tell you about the tag team situation at the time as these are the best Raw had for their belts.

Off to the very redneck Trevor Murdoch who chops away but gets caught in a headlock. Yeah Cody didn't quite get anywhere as a worker for awhile. Holly comes in and is immediately beaten down by Cade. The crowd is reacting a bit so it's not totally dead but it's nothing special. The heels are sent into each other and fall out to the floor as Holly takes over. We actually get a HOLLY chant for the only time I can ever remember.

A rollup gets two for Hardcore and it's off to Murdoch via a blind tag. Holly gets his head kicked off and things slow back down again. The champs tag in and out a lot before Cade picks up Murdoch to drop him down with a legdrop for two. We hit the chinlock on Holly which goes nowhere so Holly suplexes Trevor down. Cade misses an elbow drop but Holly still can't tag out.

Cade tries that dropping Murdoch into a legdrop move again but as almost always is the case, it doesn't work this time. Warm tag brings in Cody who hits a missile dropkick on Lance for two. Holly and Cade fall to the floor and Murdoch hits the stupid cousin of a Canadian Destroyer (much more like a sunset flip than a piledriver) to retain.

Rating: C-. Another so-so match here but at the end of the day, it's Hardcore Holly and a rookie Cody Rhodes vs. Lance Cade and Trevor Murdoch. That's only going to take you so far as the fans aren't going to care about it for the most part. I don't get why they didn't change the titles here as Holly and Rhodes would get the belts in a month (and hold them for SIX MONTHS) anyway.

The announcers explain the concept of a Survivor Series match to the uninitiated. That's something you hardly ever see anymore: a basic explanation of WHAT IS GOING ON. Sometimes you need to slow things down a bit and tell people what's going on. If you're flipping through the channels and see something flashy like wrestling, you're likely to stop but if you have no idea what's going on, you're not likely to stay. Gorilla Monsoon was a master at doing this.

Team HHH isn't worried about being down 5-4 coming into the match (Matt was hurt remember) but Kane says he isn't an underdog. We recap the Katie Vick angle (HHH: "Uh...yeah sorry about that.") and Jeff reminds HHH that he put him in the hospital. HHH is sorry about that too and says tonight they can unite in the idea of doing something terrible to someone else.

Team HHH vs. Team Umaga

HHH, Kane, Jeff Hardy, Rey Mysterio

Umaga, Mr. Kennedy, MVP, Finlay, Big Daddy V

Kennedy's mic doesn't work for the live intro at first so we can only hear the ending. Jeff is IC Champion and MVP is US Champion. Remember that we're starting at 5-4 because Matt is gone. Rey and Kennedy get things going with Kennedy using a rare power advantage to take over. Kennedy pounds in the corner but gets caught in a sunset bomb before it's off to Jeff for a BIG pop. Rey and Jeff combine for some Poetry in Motion and Kennedy is in trouble.

Scratch that trouble as Jeff runs into an elbow (JBL: "That'll knock the purple out of your hair!") and it's off to MVP. MVP limps a bit which apparently is a fake injury or something. Or maybe he's making fun of Matt Hardy. I never cared for MVP so I really don't care. Off to the 550lb Big Daddy V who uses his big fat man offense on Jeff, before stupidly throwing Jeff to the corner for a tag to Kane.

V almost immediately belly to belly suplexes Kane down for two but Kane comes back with some clotheslines in the corner. A top rope clothesline puts V down again but Kane has to chokeslam Finlay. V hits a Samoan Drop and a big elbow on Kane for the upset (yeah it's an upset) elimination. HHH comes in and hits the facebuster on the monster but gets caught by a clothesline to shift the momentum right back.

We get the match that everyone is looking forward to in HHH vs. Umaga and the fans don't react at all. Umaga takes the Game down with a belly to belly of his own and a headbutt has HHH in trouble. Umaga misses a middle rope headbutt and there's the hot tag to Rey. Rey pounds away but almost immediately gets knocked down by the other monster. Mysterio goes after

the leg but a rana is just a bad idea. Actually it is as he swings Umaga into the 619, followed by a springboard seated senton for two. Umaga is like BIG SAMOAN SCREAM and hits a spinning release Rock Bottom and the Spike to eliminate Rey.

So it's all five villains vs. Jeff and HHH, and it's not that the two superheroes are likely to run through all five and win or anything like that of course. Jeff vs. Kennedy starts things off and Hardy is in trouble quickly. I don't think Jeff really gets going until he looks like he's been thrown out of a building though. Jeff comes back with a dropkick but the slingshot dropkick in the corner misses due to an MVP assist. Cole talks about how that's the second time MVP has caused that move to miss in three days. JBL: "Maybe MVP is just smarter than the Hardys." I love it when JBL cuts Cole off at the knees. No one does it better.

Off to MVP who hooks a chinlock on Jeff which goes on for awhile. Jeff fights up but gets caught in a fireman's carry drop. MVP starts talking trash to the fans and walks into a Twist of Fate to make it 4-2. Kennedy is in next and walks into an enziguri, which allows for the tag off to HHH. A high knee sets up a clothesline for two for HHH followed by a spinebuster. HHH sees the human whale known as Big Daddy V coming and avoids an elbow which crushes Kennedy and allows HHH to make it 3-2.

V gets both superheroes on the floor and crushes Hardy against the post which probably put Jeff on the harder stuff for a few days. What the harder stuff for Jeff is I'm not sure but it has to be illegal. Back in the ring HHH and Hardy avoid a charge in the corner and hit a double DDT on V for the elimination. I've always wondered how basic moves when a monster is fresh is enough to eliminate them. These guys have no stamina at all.

It's HHH/Jeff vs. Finlay/Umaga if you're keeping track. Finlay comes in and pounds away on HHH while JBL talks about how great Finlay is. Does anyone ever have a bad thing to say about this guy? Here's something bad to say about him: he does the stupidest looking spot in wrestling where he goes the middle rope and jumps into a boot in a move that is only designed for him to jump into a boot.

Hot tag brings in Jeff for a hard (and appropriate) Irish whip into the corner and the slingshot dropkick for two. Jeff goes to the apron and is immediately drilled by Umaga to give the evil foreigners control again. Finlay whips Jeff into the corner but gets caught by a Whisper in the Wind. A mule kick staggers Umaga and there's the hot tag to HHH to meet Finlay. The high knee puts Finlay down and there's a spinebuster to follow it up.

The Pedigree is loaded up but Umaga kicks HHH's head off (there must be a great surgeon in WWE for all the times that happens) to break it up. The Celtic Cross (White Noise. It's an Irish thing) is escaped and there's the Pedigree to make it 2-1. Umaga DESTROYS HHH in the corner but the running attack misses by a mile. Pedigree, Swanton, we're done.

Rating: B-. The match was pretty fun stuff but once we got down to 5-2, it was a matter of guessing what order the five were going out in rather than who was going to win. That being said, it's probably the right move as HHH would move on from Umaga after this and take to feud with Orton. That feud would follow Hardy vs. Orton at the Rumble, so this was definitely a launching pad for the two survivors back to the main event.

Buy Smackdown vs. Raw! For some reason when they do the HIAC on the game as you would expect them to, Batista has a Smackdown tag title, a title he hadn't held in almost two years, instead of the world title he currently held.

Shaquille O'Neal is here.

Hornswoggle is still nervous in the back. Tonight's match is another of those tough love things from Vince. Speaking of the boss, he comes in and Hornswoggle immediately hugs his leg. This is one of those things that I think WWE missed about Horny: he acts like a child. HE HAS A FULL BEARD! THE GUY IS IN HIS TWENTIES! HORNSWOGGLE IS NOT A CHIL.....why am I annoyed by this? It's Hornswoggle. Vince says he made this match because Horny is a McMahon and therefore has to rise to the occasion. He compares this to his battles with Turner and the US government. Vince gives him a pep talk and Horny is ready.

Here's Shane McMahon to the arena, rocking a suit. Shane introduces Vince

and apparently they'll be in the corner of Horny tonight. Well that's nice of them. JBL says this is going to be Biblical. Cole: "This isn't the Bible." Vince isn't in his headset either. That's the natural reaction that Cole has. Why does he get to keep his job for so long?

Hornswoggle vs. Great Khali

Runjin Singh, Khali's manager, says we should have the wrestlers get together for the reading of the rules. This results in Singh talking over the referee as he translates. The fans want Shaq but they get the bell instead. The fans realize Shaq is here and Vince tells him to sit down. Vince tells the fans he doesn't care what they want. Now there's a shoot if there's ever been one. Horny takes off his jacket and hat and kicks Singh in the face. Horny kicks at the legs of Khali...and wisely runs away. Singh runs his mouth some more and gets GREEN MIST IN THE FACE!

Horny dives on Singh and pounds away before hiding from Khali under the ring. The small guy finds that Irish club and calls Khali in but the stick is of course caught. Khali kicks him down but before the Vice Grip can go on, Finlay runs in for the save and face turn. This ran over three minutes but it doesn't deserve to be rated. At least this did serve a purpose though, so it's not a total failure. It should have been on Raw though.

Finlay beats up Singh and Khali with the club. It would eventually be revealed that Finlay was Horny's father, but I'm not quite sure why Vince agreed to the whole thing in storyline.

Watch this DVD about Taker being 15-0! I guarantee you it won't be out of date in about six months or so!

Alfonso Soriano, a baseball player, is here.

We recap Shawn vs. Orton. Shawn had the title won in a previous match but Orton intentionally got himself disqualified and then Punted Shawn to the shelf for a few months. Shawn admitted he wanted revenge but Vince banned the superkick for no apparent reason other than being evil.

Raw World Title: Shawn Michaels vs. Randy Orton

Orton is defending, if Orton gets DQ'ed the title changes, Shawn can get no more shots if he loses, and if Shawn attempts to use the Superkick, he loses the match. Got all that? Shawn almost immediately goes to the cravate and Orton spends nearly two minutes trying to fight out of it. Now that's a (European) headlock. Orton escapes in the corner and Shawn raises his leg for the kick but the referee says that wasn't an attempt. It's going to be one of those referees I guess.

Orton drops down as Shawn runs the ropes so Shawn gets on Randy's back and chokes away. The hold switches to a front facelock as they're spending a lot of time in holds so far. Randy finally gets to the floor where Shawn fakes diving over the top so he can dropkick him through the ropes before faking ANOTHER dive and hitting an Asai Moonsault in a good sequence. Back in and Orton rolls through a crossbody for two before hitting an uppercut to take over.

Shawn fights up and throws on the required Sharpshooter and Orton finally makes the rope. I know when holds go on I'm not very descriptive, but what is there to say? You know what the hold looks like and it's really hard to convey the drama of someone crawling to the ropes. Orton comes back with a thumb to the eye and snaps Shawn across the top rope to take over. The Elevated DDT hits for two. I didn't remember Randy doing that move back then.

It's off to a chinlock by Orton as the hold marathon continues. It's not boring or bad but it's a very different way of going about a match. Shawn fights back but walks into a dropkick for two. Shawn catches another dropkick in mid air and slams Randy down a few times before hitting the top rope elbow for two. By instinct, Shawn tunes up the band but he fakes Orton out by making him duck and grabs a rollup for two. Brilliant psychology there.

In a move I was shocked to see at the time, Shawn puts on a Crossface. Remember that this is just five months after Benoit, so that's not a move you would have expected to see here. Orton finally gets a leg over the rope and Shawn looks spent from that not working. He tries the hold again but Randy clotheslines his head off for two. Orton hits the backbreaker and loads up the same Punt which kept Shawn out for five months.

Randy gets a running start but Shawn grabs an ankle lock with a grapevine to make Orton scream. Orton uses the good leg to kick Shawn away and break the hold. Why don't more people do that to angle? Michaels tries the Figure Four but Orton kicks him into the post. Shawn pulls up the foot for the kick but since he has to stop, Orton hits the RKO for the pin to retain the title.

Rating: B. I was digging the psychology here as Shawn had to come up with all kinds of ways to beat Orton instead of the RKO. It says a lot about Shawn that the only way they could have Orton be able to hang in a fight with him was to take away Shawn's big move. Orton would hold the title for another five months or so until HHH (of course) took it away from him.

Orton demands that Shawn say Orton is the future but Shawn is pretty out of it. There's the superkick we were waiting on.

Cole is talking about the main event and SAVE US. For those of you unfamiliar, this was a series of videos that popped up at random on shows with what looked like the Matrix announcing that someone was coming to SAVE US. It would be revealed tomorrow night that it was the return of Chris Jericho.

The Cell is lowered.

We recap Batista vs. Undertaker. Batista lost the belt to Undertaker at Wrestlemania and they feuded for the title on a few PPVs. After a cage match on Smackdown, Edge cashed in the MITB contract and won the title from Undertaker. Later, Edge was hurt and had to vacate the belt, which was won by Khali. Batista eventually beat Khali for the belt and Taker came back to challenge him for it.

They fought at Cyber Sunday with Batista winning, which made them 1-1 with a few draws. Taker wanted one more match and Batista was perfectly cool with that, but Taker wanted it in the Cell. See how that worked? It was a natural progression with the Cell being the FINAL match between them (one on one at least). That's a logical progression that you rarely get anymore. This was an excellent feud which won Feud of the Year from Meltzer. I can't argue with that at all as it was great.

Smackdown World Title: Batista vs. Undertaker

Big Dave is defending. Taker charges to start and is caught in a headlock before getting run over by Big Dave. Taker shrugs it off and tries an early chokeslam but Batista fights out of it. This is one of those feuds where you don't bother with the basic stuff and go with the big power moves because that's all that's going to have any effect. Taker clotheslines him down and pounds away in the corner. We're still in the early going here so this doesn't mean a lot yet.

The Snake Eyes and Big Boot get two for Taker and it's chair time. Batista hits a BIG spear to take Undertaker down and gets the chair. That goes badly for the champ as Taker kicks the chair back into his face and gets two off a clothesline. They head outside and Taker keeps control with a solid shot into the steps. Batista gets raked against the Cell and there's the legdrop on the apron.

To stay on the throat, Taker puts the chair over Batista's throat and slams the bottom of the chair into the steps. The champ is bleeding from the mouth now. Back in and Taker covers by driving a forearm into the throat. Taker is kind of the heel in this match I think, which says A LOT about how over Batista was here. Back in Taker loads up Old School but Batista catches him in the spinebuster in a cool counter.

They slug it out and Batista takes over with a clothesline that gets two. Batista hits a powerslam and takes it back to the floor. They've done a solid job here of having both guys dominate for a long stretch which usually works well for a big time match. Taker whips Batista into the Cell to take over again so maybe what I just said is nonsense. Batista gets rammed head first into the Cell and things are starting to pick up.

A chair shot keeps Batista down and the champ is cut open on the forehead. Batista blocks Old School again and hits a superplex to put both guys down. As Big Dave is crawling over to Taker, the Dead Man tries the Hell's Gate (triangle choke) but it's not on full. Batista makes the rope and heads to the floor for a breather. Has Batista never watched a big time Taker match? He deserves the Taker Dive that he gets.

Taker picks up the steps and tries to ram Batista with them, but Batista

pulls himself up using the cage and kicks them back into Taker's face. Batista picks up the steps and just rams Taker in the head with them four or five times, busting the Dead Man open. Back in and Batista does the stupid thing of punching Taker in the corner and gets a Last Ride for his efforts. That only gets two and the pop isn't huge from the crowd. They know we're getting A LOT of finishers before a pin here.

There's a chokeslam but it only gets two. The Tombstone is countered into a spinebuster for two and there's another spinebuster for good measure. It's table time and Batista easily powerbombs him through it...for two. There's the pop from the crowd on the kickout that we were looking for. Now the Animal loads up the steps but Taker backdrops him onto said steps for two. The Tombstone hits...for two. If my memory is right, Batista and Shawn are the only two people to take all three of Taker's finishers and kick out of all three. Batista might have done it more than once but I'm not sure.

Taker KILLS Batista with a Tombstone on the steps but at two, someone pulls the referee out of the ring. It's the returning Edge, who I presume was hiding under the ring. He steals a camera and clocks Taker with it before hitting a Conchairto on the steps. Batista has no idea this is going on after the Tombstone. Edge pulls the champ on top and the pin is pretty much academic.

Rating: B+. This was very good but it never quite got to that level that they were hoping for it to I don't think. The problem is this was match was based on respect instead of hatred which takes a lot out of a match like this. Edge would win the title in a triple threat next month and eventually lose it to Taker at Wrestlemania.

After the Cell is raised, Edge beats on Taker some more to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. This was a nice surprise. The tag title match is some uninspired stuff but other than that (ignoring the non-match between Khali and Horny) there's nothing bad on here at all. The Divas match is what it is and if the worst thing I have to do is look at Kelly Kelly and Maria in barely there shorts for five minutes, I've got a good show on my hands. The big matches delivered and the other matches aren't bad so this

is a solid show all around and worth checking out.

Ratings Comparison

CM Punk vs. John Morrison vs. The Miz

Original: B-

Redo: C

Mickie James/Maria/Torrie Wilson/Michelle McCool/Kelly Kelly vs. Beth Phoenix/Melina/Jillian Hall/Victoria/Layla

Original: D

Redo: D

Lance Cade/Trevor Murdoch vs. Hardcore Holly/Cody Rhodes

Original: D

Redo: C-

Team HHH vs. Team Umaga

Original: C-

Redo: B-

Great Khali vs. Hornswoggle

Original: N/A

Redo: N/A

Randy Orton vs. Shawn Michaels

Original: D+

Redo: B

Batista vs. Undertaker

Original: A-

Redo: B+

Overall Rating

Original: B-

Redo: B

The main thing I've learned about myself from these redos is that I was a lot looser with my grades back then. The redo grades here are a lot more toned down and it's a bit harder to please me now.

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