

SuperBrawl 1995: Find Me An Interesting Giraffe

SuperBrawl V

Date: February 19, 1995

Location: Baltimore Arena, Baltimore, Maryland

Attendance: 13, 390

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Bobby Heenan

This was actually a request on Twitter from the people over at markedout.com. If there's ever a show that I can find that you want me to review, let me know and I'd be glad to take a look at it. This is from a bad time for WCW as Hogan had debuted and basically taken the whole company over, running roughshod over everyone in sight. Tonight's main event is Hogan vs. Vader for the title, after Hogan no sold the powerbomb recently on the Clash of the Champions. See, not the most logical thing in the world. Let's get to it.

Now the WWE Network version of this show says that the opening is missing and that their version is the most complete one available. However, other complete versions are available online so I'll be looking at a different version before I go to the Network.

The following is actually how the show started. As much as I wish I could take credit for it, I'm not making this up.

The Nasty Boys are in the streets of Baltimore and are going on a tour. Their first stop: the Maryland Science Center. They go inside and build a tower out of blocks, but Sags presses a button that makes the table shake to see if their tower is earthquake proof. Now Knobbs plays with a static electricity machine to make his hair stand up. Sags goes off to see something else as Knobbs can't just take his hand off the machine for some reason.

After pestering some fans, he's told that Sags has gone to the aquarium. Brian goes over to find him but is handed a starfish and a crab instead. The attendant tells him that Sags went into the rainforest but Brian

can't find him there either. He goes to watch some dolphins perform when Sags comes up and says he was locked in a submarine for an hour. Then they eat some lobsters, reminisce about the show, and leave for SuperBrawl.

Normally I would make jokes about what I just saw, but I'm really not sure what it was. The levels of random in this were so out there that I can't believe it exists. I mean....WHAT WAS THAT??? They were doing experiments and Sags was locked in a submarine? I know WCW was strange around this time but my goodness what was up with this?

The opening video focuses on Hogan vs. Vader, which was set up at the end of Starrcade. That's about as easy of a match as you could ask for, but it was basically spoiled when Hogan no sold Vader's powerbomb at a recent Clash of the Champions.

The announcers chat about the main event and Gene thinks Vader wants to permanently injure Hogan.

We see a clip from earlier which shows Vader possibly arriving with Ric Flair, who was recently retired. Vader attacked another car he thought Hogan was in (Tony says that was his, as in Tony's limo. TONY SCHIAVONE HAD HIS OWN LIMO??? Were those things handed out as party favors?) where he breaks out a window and doesn't require surgery, proving conclusively that either Vader is tougher than Goldberg, or they made better limousines in 1999.

During Main Event (the regular TV show before the pay per view started), Vader came to the ring and attacked Stars N Stripes (Marcus Bagwell/the Patriot) and the jobbers they just beat.

Alex Wright vs. Paul Roma

Yeah there are actually matches on here. Wright is a newcomer and fresh off fighting the man who would be known as HHH at Starrcade. Roma is somehow a former Horsemen and Wright is a young kid trying to prove himself. Now this should be obvious, but this is WCW. Apparently this is over Wright getting all the women recently. Roma, in a singlet for the only time I can ever remember, jumps Wright during his pre-match dance. A

failure of a gorilla press puts Wright down and Paul does Wright's dance to a face reaction.

Back up and Wright grabs an armdrag to take over, but Paul pulls him down by the hair, barely selling a thing in the process. A rope walking wristdrag puts Roma down as two good looking women (ring attendants who don't do anything of note) come out. The girls don't get any attention so here's Roma's partner in Pretty Wonderful, Paul Orndorff. Alex stays on the arm but Roma pops up and takes over with some elbow drops.

Three straight backbreakers have Alex in even more trouble. Notice that Wright hasn't gotten to do anything past arm work and Roma is showing off. He sends Wright outside and poses even more as this has been a Roma showcase match so far. Alex comes back with right hands but Roma steps to the side to make Wright look stupid on a sunset flip attempt. Wright tries a backslide but Roma fights it off for at least fifteen seconds before going down for one. Roma comes right back with stomps and we hit the chinlock so let's look at the crowd. The fans aren't pleased and I'm sure the bosses aren't either.

Back up again and Alex makes a comeback, only to have Roma grab the ropes to send Alex crashing to the mat. Paul gets two off a top rope elbow before Alex starts another comeback, only to have Roma intentionally screw up a hiptoss. Orndorff breaks up a cover off a cross body but Alex dropkicks the Pauls into each other and grabs the rollup for the pin. Roma kicked out at two and a half but the referee counted the pin anyway to get out while they could.

Rating: D-. Absolutely none of this is on Wright. Alex was 19 here and in the biggest match of his career with someone completely in this for himself. In case you couldn't guess, this was Paul Roma's last match ever on a national stage. I don't remember a less professional performance in all my years of watching wrestling.

Paul was out there to make himself look good and Wright was destroyed in the process. Paul Roma is one of those guys who was around other big names and is remembered for doing some decent things, even though it was almost always the partner carrying things while Roma was just there.

Disgusting match.

Sister Sherri and the newly credible Harlem Heat (only recently renamed Booker T. and Stevie Ray from their old names of Kane and Kole) promise to keep their titles tonight. Gene can't even remember which is which yet. It's so bizarre to see a famous team as newcomers, even though they had been around for well over a year at this point.

Bunkhouse Buck vs. Jim Duggan

Buck (with manager Colonel Parker and bodyguard Meng) is a big power brawler from Tennessee. Basically think Luke Harper with less hair and less talent. They slug it out to start (duh) and the fans chant USA. As usual, why doesn't that work for Buck too? A bunch of right hands and a clothesline put Buck on the floor. More right hands set up a chinlock on Buck inside as we're firmly in brawl mode. Buck finally sneaks in a shot with a rope and Duggan is knocked to the floor.

Back in and we hit the chinlock on Duggan as this is already in big trouble. Duggan fights up again and kicks Buck into the corner, followed by a backdrop and yet another chinlock. Jim yells at the referee and walks around the ring after a right hand to the face. An elbow gets two for Duggan as this marathon of first gear wrestling continues. Duggan puts on a ridiculous third chinlock in about seven minutes before yelling at Parker.

A spinning slam and knee drop get two for Jim, who is....my goodness it's the FOURTH chinlock. Jim mixes up his right hands by throwing them in the corner instead. With that working so well, Duggan puts on an armbar. Yes seriously, ten minutes into THIS match and it's an armbar. Parker gets on the apron but Buck accidentally throws Duggan into him, only to have Duggan bounce back and hit a Three Point Clothesline for the pin.

Rating: F. I don't remember the last time a major show started with a worse half hour. Absolutely horrible match here and I have no idea why this was even on the card. Duggan on offense for most of the match is one of the worst imaginable ideas, but having it be against Bunkhouse Buck was even worse. This was horrible and I have no idea who thought it was a good idea.

Meng comes in and massacres Duggan, instantly becoming the most interesting thing on the show so far. Well ok so it's as entertaining as a superkick and nerve hold can be but it's not Duggan vs. Buck so points for that.

The Nasty Boys are ready for their title shot tonight and will take Harlem Heat to Nastyville for the last time. They'll slap Sherri's face off if they have to.

Dave Sullivan vs. Kevin Sullivan

Oh sweet goodness I thought I had blocked this out of my mind. So these two are brothers and Dave (formerly Evad, which is Dave backwards because Dave is dyslexic, even though I don't think that's how it works) is a huge Hulkamaniac but Kevin despises Hulk so this is a grudge match. The problem here is Kevin is 100x the wrestler Dave is, and if you've ever seen a Kevin Sullivan match, you know what we could be in for here. Kevin has the Butcher (Brutus Beefcake) in his corner here.

Dave is ready for a sneak attack from his brother and hits one of the most awkward elbows to the face to send Kevin outside. Ten very slow rams into the buckle set up ten very slow (and badly exposed by the camera) right hands from Dave. Butcher trips Dave up as we hear about Kevin cutting Dave's hair and destroying the boots that Hogan gave him (allegedly the same ones he wore to defeat Andre), which Dave called the magic slippers. So yes, not only is Hogan dominating everyone in the main event, one of the characters on this show is a Hogan super fan.

Back in and Kevin stops a stumble with a boot to the face. Dave fights back from his knees and chokes a lot, only to have Kevin chop him back down. Kevin crotches himself on the ropes though, allowing Dave to very slowly ram him into the buckle again. This draws Butcher to the apron and Kevin sends Dave into him, setting up a.....hand on Dave's trunks for the pin. In theory it was a rollup with a handful of trunks, but Kevin wasn't actually making contact with Dave or rolling him up in any way, shape or form.

Rating: D-. I can't believe I'm saying this, but Buck vs. Duggan is actually the match of the night in the first 45 minutes. This almost

trumped it but my goodness Dave was terrible. I mean....my goodness man. This is really the best the promotion could offer? How could this possibly be considered a good idea? Is there really anything here other than Hogan's ego needing a good rub? If so, was there no one you could put out there instead of Dave Sullivan?

The ram into Butcher might have hurt his face (which the announcers said was full of metal plates, meaning Dave has a face harder than steel). This would lead to him being known as the Man With No Face. You think I can make this stuff up??? Kevin doesn't seem to mind.

Tony tries to talk about the show but Heenan has problems with his chair. The point of this is to announce Pedro Morales debuting as a Spanish announcer. I've always liked the guy so I can't complain.

Avalanche (Earthquake) and Big Bubba Rogers (Big Boss Man) cut a promo that belongs in the 80s. Avalanche's is the exact same promo he cut for years but with a different name at the end. Rogers on the other hand is tired of listening to the fans and is out for himself now. This was really, really lame.

Tag Team Titles: Harlem Heat vs. Nasty Boys

Harlem Heat, with Sherri in the corner, is defending and these teams fought about 19 times in a row. The Nasty Boys are the good guys here. Before we get going, Booker calls a fan a dumb idiot. Doesn't that mean they're actually smart? All four jaw at each other to start until it's Brian and Booker getting things going. Mr. T. slaps him in the face but misses a side kick and crotches himself on the ropes.

Off to Sags for a gutbuster and an elbow to the ribs (called the leg for some reason) with Stevie making the save via a hearty slap on the back. Heenan wants Stevie to kick Sags like a dog but gets forearms to the face instead. Unfortunately this is before Booker was a well rounded wrestler so this is going to be a brawl no matter who is in there. The Boys get Booker into the corner for some clubberin and Brian drops a leg to the back of the head (well, he is Hogan's buddy after all).

Booker's raised boot in the corner doesn't do much but Stevie offers a

cheap shot from the apron, allowing Booker to dropkick Sags out to the floor. Back in and Stevie kicks Jerry right back outside where Sherri gets in a glove shot to stagger Sags all over again. Booker does the years away from being named Spinarooni and it's off to a chinlock. Sags' comeback is stopped by another kick to the face and Stevie puts on another chinlock.

Another comeback is countered with another kick and Booker comes in for a front facelock. Those holds ate up the better part of three minutes. Booker misses a middle rope elbow and Sags scores with a powerslam. The hot tag brings in Brian to a lukewarm reaction at best. A double DDT to the champs draws the pop of the night (see how much bigger of a move that used to be?) but Booker saves the pin. Sherri hits Stevie with the loaded purse by mistake and Brian gets the pin and the titles.

Rating: D. Match of the night here by about 10,000 and it was boring stuff all throughout. Cut this down to like twelve minutes instead of the seventeen (!) it got and this is far better. These teams were better (or at least more entertaining) when it was a wild brawl instead of a match, but Harlem Heat would get a lot better in the next year or so.

Scratch the title change which might be interesting. Apparently Knobbs threw Booker over the top and that's a DQ, meaning the Heat keep the titles.

Savage and Sting are ready for the monsters. That almost has to be better if they just follow the standard formula. Gene: "This has been one of the best four or five pay per views I've ever been involved in."

Ad for Uncensored, which actually might be worse than this show. If you've never seen it, imagine a match taking place in the back of a truck as it goes down a highway. Literally, that's what happened.

The announcers preview Blacktop Bully vs. Dustin Rhodes, which is part of the Rhodes Family vs. Colonel Parker's Stud Stable. The Bully is Barry Darsow, better known as Demolition Smash but as an evil truck driver. Dustin got him sent to prison for reasons not important enough to explain here, but lucky for you, I care about this story more than WCW.

Bully debuted as a really obnoxious fan who eventually pushed Dustin, causing the arrest. Colonel Parker bailed him out of jail to add Bully into the feud with the Rhodes Family, which was the WarGames match in 1994. The feud is still going FIVE MONTHS AFTER FREAKING WARGAMES. 1995 was such a stupid time for WCW.

Blacktop Bully vs. Dustin Rhodes

Commissioner Nick Bockwinkel comes out and says Meng can't be at ringside for this match due to his attack on Duggan earlier tonight. Bully tries to get in a cheap shot to start but Dustin ducks underneath and hammers away in the corner. That's fine with Bully who shrugs them off and chop blocks Dustin down before ripping the jacket off. The choke with the jacket doesn't count as a foreign object because Dustin brought it in. But a removed boot is considered illegal? Wrestling rules are really screwy sometimes.

Dustin kicks him to the floor and Bully comes up holding his arm. Naturally (remember Dustin is the Natural at this point) this leads to a headlock but at least Dustin wakes up a few seconds later and cranks on the arm. The arm is sent into the buckle and we hit that hammerlock. The fans chant KFC at Parker because he's been called a chicken. Again, this is as good as it got around this time. Bully tries to wrestle out of things but get caught in another hammerlock.

Back up and Dustin jacks Bully's jaw before planting him with a suplex for two. Dustin teases going after Parker but punches a diving Bully out of the air. Bully finally gets in a shot of his own and this match MUST CONTINUE, meaning even more trucker jokes from Heenan. We hit the slow stomping portion of the match as the fans are just deadly silent. A belly to back suplex sets up another chinlock to kill even more time.

Bully dumps him through the ropes and onto the steps and the fans still don't care. This is one of the quietest crowds I've ever heard but Dustin trips him up and wraps the leg around the post to wake them up for a few seconds. Dustin knocks him out of the air to put both guys down again and the fans try to get going.

The Bully finally loses his vest, revealing one heck of a beer gut in the

process. Dustin's bulldog connects for two with Parker putting his foot on the ropes for the break. For reasons of general stupidity, Dustin suplexes Parker into the ring and tries the same on the Bully, only to have Parker grab the leg for the Wrestlemania V ending after SIXTEEN MINUTES.

Rating: D. Good grief this was long. These matches have just dragged on over and over all night long and this was one of the longest. Bully is one of the lamest characters I've ever seen and somehow, these two had a match in the back of a freaking truck the next month, which thankfully got Dustin fired so he could be Goldust by the end of the year. So to clarify, we just saw a sixteen minute Goldust vs. Repo Man match on pay per view.

Vader does his usual I AM A MONSTER promo and throws in a shout out to his son Jesse. He won't confirm or deny that Flair was in one of the limos earlier.

The announcers talk about the title match. Tony wants to know if the lady in Vader's limo was Ric Flair.

Speaking of Flair, here he is and of course Baltimore loves him after he lost to Hogan as a heel. Flair asks why he would be in Vader's limousine and makes sure to rant about Hogan for a bit. He'll be sitting at ringside with five good looking women for the last two matches.

Avalanche/Big Bubba Rogers vs. Sting/Randy Savage

Maybe this can be better through pure talent in the ring. Great Muta (without paint and sitting next to the yet to be named Sonny Onoo) is in the audience, probably wondering when he can get out of this stupid show. Avalanche shoves Sting into the corner to start and hammers away with the big forearms but Sting staggers him with clotheslines and a dropkick. Off to Rogers for a backbreaker but he makes the mistake of going up, allowing Savage to crotch him down.

Sting plants him with a slam off the top and punches Bubba out to the floor, setting up Savage's top rope ax handle. As the guys are on the floor, Heenan calls Flair the thing that stirs the drink. Sting invites

Flair to come into the ring as Bubba slugs Savage down but misses a sitting splash. Savage, ever the psycho, slaps Avalanche in the face twice in a row. After a quick chase, Avalanche misses a charge in the corner and winds up on the top rope for some kicks to the ample gut.

It's off to Sting to go after the ribs and put on the Scorpion but everything breaks down. Stinger Splashes nail both giants but Avalanche comes back with something like a chokeslam to stop Sting cold. The villains take over again until Sting slams Avalanche, only to walk into a right hand from Bubba, which sends Sting head first between Avalanche's legs. It's a hot tag to Savage to clean some house but Sting gets a quick tag, setting up a high cross body on Avalanche who topples over Bubba, giving Sting the pin.

Rating: C. Yes it was your standard TV main event and no it wasn't anything special, but it was so refreshing to watch some people with charisma after watching the previous two hours of horrible. Sting and Savage are good examples of people who can make a match better by pure charisma, even if the action isn't great. This was nothing special but it was one thing everything else wasn't: entertaining.

CALL THE HOTLINE!

More main event talk with Tony saying the feud started at SuperBrawl, meaning Starrcade. That passes for an interesting point on this show.

We recap Hogan vs. Vader, which is your standard Hogan vs. monster formula, but with a different kind of monster. Vader spent months saying Hogan was ducking him, so Hogan no sold the powerbomb to make this feud look lame. This actually is a dream match, or at least it would have been three years ago.

Hogan says he's ready for the latest challenge of Hulkamania. Even his family is worried about Vader hurting him tonight but the Pythons are ready for Vader Time.

WCW World Title: Hulk Hogan vs. Vader

Hogan is defending of course and Vader is US Champion. For the sake of

clarity, only Hogan will be referred to as champion. Hogan has Jimmy Hart in his corner which never worked for me. Flair is still at ringside too with Commissioner Nick Bockwinkel watching next to the timekeeper. We get the Big Match Intros to kill more time and they're actually making this feel important. Vader no sells right hands to start and the mask is off early.

The champ fires off a bunch of slaps and a clothesline but Vader is all BRING IT. The frontal assault didn't work so Hogan tries a wristlock for the same result. Vader starts pounding away in the corner and the fans are cheering the monster. A splash sends Hogan running to the floor but he knocks Vader over the barricade and at Flair's feet. Back in and Hogan just fires off all the right hands he can before clotheslining Vader out to the floor. Choking in the corner keeps Vader in trouble as the fans are suddenly quiet again. The slam attempt fails and Vader hits the standing body attack as Hogan is quickly reeling.

Hogan shouts to Jimmy that the man is too strong because when you have Vader killing you, Jimmy Hart is your best possible option. The Vader Bomb connects (Heenan: "MAGILLA GORILLA!") but Vader takes too long loading up the moonsault and only hits mat. They fight to the floor and our hero cracks Vader with a chair. Vader is in trouble but he shrugs it off and runs Hogan again, just like he did back in 1992.

It's Hulk Up time but the legdrop gets one with Vader throwing him to his feet on the kickout. There goes the referee and Vader powerbombs Hogan for no count. Flair comes in and counts three, but thankfully Vader doesn't think he's won the title. The referee crawls over for two and it's time for Hulk Up #2 with Vader getting knocked to the floor, only to have Flair come in for the DQ.

Rating: C. That's it? That's the big Hogan vs. Vader showdown that should have headlined Starrcade but the world was just dying for that Brutus Beefcake vs. Hogan showdown. I'm assuming now that I'm supposed to want to see Vader vs. Hogan II with a gimmick attached instead of Hogan trying to get his title back after the heels take the title away here. But that might mean Hogan isn't the greatest thing ever and that's not a world WCW wanted to live in so we get this lame ending instead. Still though,

decent match.

Hogan gets put in the Figure Four but Sting and Savage run out for the save. Hulk N Pals celebrate to end the show.

Overall Rating: F. Yeah it's a disaster and one of the worst cards I've ever sat through, but it's the please introduce me to a hyper giraffe kind of bad instead of wanting to flog an old man with a tree branch kind of bad. The problem here is that none of this, other than the main event, needed to be on pay per view. It's a big batch of TV matches with nothing good or even remotely good until the main event matches. Just a horrible show all around from a very dark period for WCW.

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