

Summerslam Count-Up – 2008: HHH's Summer Miracle

Summerslam 2008

Date: August 17, 2008

Location: Conseco Fieldhouse, Indianapolis, Indiana

Attendance: 15,997

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler, Michael Cole, Tazz, Todd Grisham, Matt Striker

For the first time in a few years, it feels like we've got a big card tonight. It's a double main event with Undertaker vs. Edge inside the Cell and Cena vs. Batista for the first time ever. I remember being very fired up for this show when it first aired so hopefully it lives up to the hype after some very lackluster entries the last few years. Let's get to it.

The theme this year is that this is the ultimate summer blockbuster. I've heard worse. This shifts into your standard opening video.

It's another good song here with Ready to Roll by Jet Black Stare.

We run down the card because you might have ordered the show blind or something?

MVP vs. Jeff Hardy

Jeff is in the middle of the biggest story of his life, as he's been chasing the world title all year. This resulted in one of the highest number of buys ever for the Rumble, yet he's opening the show here in a midcard match. Makes sense in WWE world I guess. There isn't much of a story here other than MVP has been messing with Jeff lately. Hardy starts with two right hands to send MVP to the floor and there's a whip into the barricade. Back in and a slingshot legdrop gets two for Jeff and we hit the armbar.

MVP makes the ropes and the referee has to keep pulling Jeff out of the

corner. Jeff eventually gets free and charges right into a snap belly to belly for two. MVP kicks him in the back and puts on something like a crucifix hold before rolling over into a camel clutch. Off to something like a side leg bar but MVP eventually lets it go. Jeff goes to the apron but MVP knocks him out of the air to break up a springboard, getting two.

Jeff is put in the Tree of Woe so MVP picks him up and slams the top of his head into the mat. That's a new one. MVP loads up something like a Gory Bomb but Jeff slips down the back and neckbreakers his way to freedom. The slingshot dropkick in the corner is countered by two feet to Hardy's chest but Jeff avoids the Drive By kick in the corner. A sunset flip gets two for Jeff and the Whisper in the Wind puts MVP down again. Cue US Champion Shelton Benjamin to distract Hardy from the Swanton, allowing MVP to move. The Drive By kick is good for the pin on Jeff.

Rating: B-. Summerslam almost always has good openers and this is a good example. I never got into MVP like a lot of people did but this was a solid performance from him. Shelton had been involved with this feud as an accessory on Smackdown but it's not exactly enough of a connection for the run-in here to work. Good match though.

Glamarella (Santino and Beth) is ready for their mixed tag winner take all match with Kofi and Mickie. Santino talks about the unibrow and how the tabloids love the new name for the two of them. Maria, Santino's ex, is doing the interview so we get a stare down between the girls.

Intercontinental Title/Women's Title: Glamarella vs. Mickie James/Kofi Kingston

Mickie and Kofi have both belts coming in but the winning team walks out with all the gold. Kofi is still relatively new here and has only won the IC Title once, as opposed to his 89 or so reigns now. The girls get things going with Beth easily overpowering James. Mickie comes back with some quick dropkicks for two before it's off to Santino. James easily monkey flips him over before it's off to Kofi for some of his usual stuff. The jumping punches in the corner have Santino on the floor where Beth yells at him.

Kingston loads up a charge but hangs on, only to send Santino jumping

into Beth's arms. Kofi pulls him back in but gets his neck snapped across the top rope for one. Beth beats on Kofi for a bit before bringing Santino back in for his basic offense. A suplex sets up a chinlock but Kofi fights up and butts heads with Santino, allowing for the double tags to the girls. Mickie cleans house and clotheslines Beth down before snapping off her hurricanrana on Beth. Kofi comes in and misses a charge like an idiot but the MickieDT puts Santino down. Beth decks Mickie and hits the Glam Slam for both titles.

Rating: D+. The match was nothing special and could have been on any given Raw. I don't know of a better way they could have gotten the title on Santino though so you can't fault the for trying. Kofi would begin his long float in the midcard which would last for the next several years other than a cup of coffee in the upper midcard. The girls looked good here but that's about it.

Santino gets on Beth's shoulders to celebrate.

Video on Shawn Michaels' eye injury. He may not be able to continue wrestling due to the eye and for the first time he's listening to his doctors. If they tell him it's too bad, he's walking away.

Here's Shawn with his wife for the announcement. Shawn talks about how his doctors have re-evaluated his eye and it looks like he's going to have to walk away. He remembers his first Summerslam and since then the fans have let him become the Heart Break Kid and Mr. Wrestlemania. He's also the guy who screwed Bret Hart (wasn't that Hebner?), the man who formed DX, the man who lost his smile and the man who retired Ric Flair. Now though he can be a full time husband and a full time father....and here's Jericho, the man who injured Shawn's eye.

Jericho, currently an awesome heel rocking a suit, says that he's not accepting this. Shawn isn't leaving due to an eye injury on his own terms. He wants Shawn to admit that he's walking away because of what Jericho did to him and nothing else. Shawn gets serious and says to get out of the ring but Jericho wants to hear that Shawn is leaving because of him. Shawn needs to admit it to his wife, his children, himself and to Jericho. All of Shawn's accomplishments don't matter because the epitaph

of his career will be that he was forced to walk away because of Chris Jericho.

Shawn says he'll admit it and tell his wife and kids what Jericho wants to hear on one condition: if Jericho goes home to his wife and kids and tells them that he never could be Shawn Michaels. BURN! Shawn goes to walk away but Jericho swings, only to hit Shawn's wife, knocking her out cold. What a man that Shawn is, ducking when his wife was behind him. You know it's on at Unforgiven now and the fans are eating this stuff up. This was the feud of the year in 2008 and there's no arguing that.

ECW Title: Mark Henry vs. Matt Hardy

Matt earned the title by doing something not important enough to explain to us. These two teamed up on ECW with Mark attacking his partner, injuring his ribs. Mark hits a quick forearm to the back but misses a charge, allowing Matt to hit the Twist of Fate, drawing in Henry's manager Tony Atlas for the DQ 30 seconds in.

Jeff Hardy comes out to make the save and the Hardys suplex Henry.

We recap CM Punk vs. JBL. Punk cashed in the MITB case a few weeks ago on Raw to bring the World Heavyweight Championship to Raw. JBL bullied Punk and called him a footnote in wrestling. It's a basic story but sometimes that's the best idea, which is the case here.

Raw World Title: CM Punk vs. John Bradshaw Layfield

Punk was basically a glorified midcarder at this point but his time would come. JBL shoves Punk into the corner to start and a hard shoulder puts the champion down. Punk comes back with a flying forearm to send him to the outside and a suicide dive fires the fans up even more. Back in and a high cross body gets a one count for Punk but another shoulder block puts him down. Punk tries to go up, only to be taken down by a middle rope fall away slam for two.

JBL goes after the back and we hit the bearhug. This is a basic big guy vs. little guy formula so far but again there's nothing wrong with that at all. Punk fights out of it as the fans are getting rowdy. We stay on

the back as JBL continues his basic power offense. Back to a side grip on Punk's ribs on the mat before we go old school with an abdominal stretch. Punk fights out and hits the knee in the corner/bulldog combo but the ribs give out on the GTS attempt. JBL takes him back down and drops some elbows for two.

The clothesline misses and Punk starts firing off his strikes, hitting a high kick to the head for two. A springboard clothesline is countered into a powerslam for two and JBL yells at the referee a lot. Another clothesline attempt from JBL is countered with a leg lariat to put both guys down. They hit heads as JBL fell and Punk is busted open from the back of his head. Layfield blocks another knee/bulldog combo by putting Punk on the buckle for a belly to back superplex. There much be something really wrong because Punk pops up and hits a quick GTS to retain. Oh yeah there's a BIG blood spot from where Punk was laying on the mat.

Rating: C+. This needed a few more minutes but with a legit cut that bad you have to go home in a hurry. Obviously Punk was going to win the entire time so it's not like the ending was changed that badly. What we did get was good stuff with a basic story that is going to work time after time and did so here.

We recap HHH vs. Great Khali. Again not much to say here: HHH won the Smackdown Title and dominated for a few months until Khali was one of the few challengers he had left. Again it's your basic hero vs. monster but the question coming in is can HHH Pedigree Khali. He tries for weeks leading up but never could pull it off.

Smackdown World Title: HHH vs. Great Khali

The Game is defending. HHH is a very tall man in his own right and is probably a foot shorter than Khali. The champion pounds away but has to stick and move to not get killed. That doesn't blow HHH's skirt up though so he tries the Pedigree. Khali easily grabs HHH and hits his Punjabi Plunge (two handed chokeslam finisher) but doesn't cover. Instead he loads up his Vice (head squeeze) but HHH kicks at the long legs to escape. A chop block puts Khali down and out to the floor where his manager Runjin Singh tries to calm him down.

HHH, ever the bright guy, charges at Khali again and is chopped down with ease. Back inside and Khali pounds away with some elbows in the corner to drop the champion. The fans tell Khali that he can't wrestle as he puts one foot on HHH for a cover. Off to a nerve hold by the challenger followed by a slam and legdrop. Back to the nerve hold for a bit before HHH fights up and hits the facebuster. It doesn't put Khali on the mat but it does tie him up in the ropes.

Khali will have none of this being in trouble though as he lifts up his boot to kick HHH down before freeing himself from the ropes. Back up and HHH tries the Pedigree again, only to be backdropped out to the floor. A hard chop puts HHH down again and as they come back in there's the vice grip again. HHH almost breaks the hold but Khali gets it back on for a few more seconds. A charge misses the champion in the corner and he FINALLY hits the Pedigree to retain the title.

Rating: C+. This match, while slow, was a great example of psychology in a wrestling match. HHH knew that there was only one move he could use to hurt Khali and give him a chance for the win so it was the only thing he tried for most of the match. This was HHH working around someone and it worked quite well as HHH is a very talented wrestler, which unfortunately is often forgotten.

We recap Cena vs. Batista. Cena accidentally punched Batista in a tag match on Raw, triggering a brawl between the two. It became exactly what it should have been: a showdown between the two guys who had carried the company for the last three years. This was one of the few dream matches they had built up for years and belonged as a PPV main event. Cena said he had been wanting this match for six years because he just didn't know if he could beat Batista.

John Cena vs. Batista

Batista shoves Cena back to start before grabbing a headlock. Cena comes back with a quick slam and Batista stops to take a breather. A big clothesline puts Cena down and a Jackhammer gets two. Cena comes right back with a suplex of his own for two but Batista puts him down with a side slam. A quick FU attempt is countered and Batista goes after the

leg. Off to a Figure Four on Cena (just like Flair, he puts it on the wrong leg) who can't power out so we get a rope grab instead for the break.

Back up immediately and Cena throws Batista to the floor in something resembling an FU before collapsing down. Back in again and Cena fires off the shoulder blocks and the ProtoBomb to set up the Shuffle. The FU is countered again and Batista kicks him in the face to put both guys down. Batista drives shoulders into the corner and catches him in the spinebuster to put Cena down. Cena backdrops out of the Batista Bomb and hits a DDT on the leg to set up the STFU. Batista FINALLY crawls over and gets a rope to shock Cena.

Batista gets up and escapes another FU to hook a rear naked choke of all things. Cena fights out of a hold as well, only to get caught by a spear for a VERY close two. They're in full on main event mode here and it's getting very awesome. Cena counters a powerslam into an FU but can't follow up due to exhaustion. It's finally good for two so Cena goes up with nowhere else to go.

Batista is up as well and they slug it out on top with Batista being knocked to the mat. Cena tries the Fameasser but gets caught in a Batista Bomb....for two, plus a neck injury that required three months off (I seem to remember that happening earlier but WWE said it was here). Not that it matters as Batista goes into Animal Mode and ENDS Cena with a Batista Bomb for the pin.

Rating: A-. This is exactly what it was supposed to be: the two top guys in the company going to war with only one left standing. It's a great fight in the vein of Rock vs. Austin from back in the day. Almost no complaints here and it felt like a major match on a major stage. What else can you ask for here?

The Cell is lowered.

We recap Edge vs. Undertaker. They fought for the world title at Wrestlemania with Taker winning the title (duh) before Edge's wife Vickie Guerrero stripped him of the title for using the Hell's Gate, which was declared illegal. Edge won the title in a TLC match and Taker left for a

bit, but Edge got caught cheating with his wedding planner (Alicia Fox). Vickie reinstated Taker and set up the Cell match here tonight. Edge got Mick Foley to try to find out how to beat Undertaker in the Cell (even though Foley lost) and was told to bring back the Rated R Superstar inside of him. Edge beat up Foley and was back.

Edge vs. Undertaker

It takes two minutes and forty five seconds from Taker's gong to him slamming the Cell door closed. Edge fires off right hands in the corner but walks into a big boot. We head outside the ring so Edge can be rammed into the steel. A series of headbutts puts Edge down and Taker whips him hard into the steps. Vickie and company (La Familia) is watching in the back.

Back inside now but with steps involved as well. The Snake Eyes drop Edge on the steps but he blocks the big boot and sends Taker into the steps instead. Edge hits a spear to a seated dead man but doesn't go for a cover. Instead he grabs a table but stops to knock Taker out with the steps to the head. Edge gets another table but doesn't slide either of them into the ring. The table is set up on the floor instead but Edge has to fight out of a chokeslam attempt instead of sending Taker through it.

Now it's chair time with Edge dropping Taker again. Here's a third table but the first one actually brought into the ring. Edge pulls out a ladder as TLCHIAC continues. Another chair shot puts Taker down as we have a ladder, a table and steps in the ring. Three of the four things are used as Edge puts Taker on the table and picks up the chair before climbing the ladder. He drives the dead man through the table in the same spot he used on Foley a few weeks ago. Nice touch.

It's only good for two though so it's time for a Conchairto, only to have Taker grab Edge by the throat. Edge breaks free but gets caught in a big right hand to put him back down. A bit boot sends Edge into the cage and Taker crushes his head with the steps for good measure. Edge posts Taker to get a breather and uses the steps as a launching pad to knock Taker through the Cell. Taker's arm is bleeding a bit.

They fight at the announce table before Edge is sent into the barricade

to put him down again. Taker misses a monitor shot to the head, allowing Edge to crack him in the head with it instead. In the big spot of the match, Edge runs the announce tables for a big spear to Undertaker, putting both guys down. Edge can't follow up so Taker wins a slug out and they head back inside, drawing some moderate booring. Back in and a ladder to the face gives Edge control again and a chair shot gets two.

Taker counters the spear into a chokeslam for a close two and Taker is getting frustrated. The Last Ride is countered by a low blow and an Impaler gets two. Back up and Taker loads up the Last Ride again but wants it through the tables on the floor. Edge slips over the top and hits the spear for a very close two. Now the Last Ride connects but Edge gets out at two.

Taker loads up a tombstone off the steps but Edge counters into an Edge-O-Matic onto the steps for two. Now Edge loads up Old School but Taker crotches him down and chokeslams him through the tables on the floor. Back in and Undertaker spears Edge down and breaks a camera over his head. A Conchairto crushes Edge's skull and the tombstone finally ends this.

Rating: A. THIS is how you blow off a feud. Edge was completely destroyed at the end here with Undertaker hitting every big move he had and Edge not kicking out of them at all. These two had some great action all year long and the Cell is the best way to blow the whole thing off. Having it as a TLC match inside the Cell was fine and it made for a great main event.

Taker leaves but Edge very slowly gets up. The big man goes back inside and sets up the ladder before lifting Edge onto it. Taker throws in another ladder and climbs up next to Edge so he can throw the Canadian down through the mat. He raises his arms up and lights the hole on fire to end the show in a corny moment.

Overall Rating: A-. This was pretty awesome all around. The opener was good, one match didn't count, the title matches were both decent to good and the main events both rocked. You could say the tag match wasn't very good but it's less than six minutes long and Santino makes it

entertaining enough. This is one of the better shows they've had in the series and it's well worth checking out.

Ratings Comparison

MVP vs. Jeff Hardy

Original: B

Redo: B-

Kofi Kingston/Mickie James vs. Glamarella

Original: D

Redo: D+

Matt Hardy vs. Mark Henry

Original: N/A

Redo: N/A

CM Punk vs. John Bradshaw Layfield

Original: B-

Redo: C+

Great Khali vs. HHH

Original: B+

Redo: C+

Batista vs. John Cena

Original: A

Redo: A-

Edge vs. Undertaker

Original: A-

Redo: A

Overall Rating

Original: A-

Redo: A-

Yep, it's still great.

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/08/11/history-of-summerslam-count-up-2008-punk-as-champion-thatll-never-happen-again/>

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