

Wrestlemania Count-Up – Wrestlemania VII: Stars and Stripes and Randy and Elizabeth Forever

Wrestlemania VII

Date: March 24, 1991

Location: Los Angeles Memorial Sports Arena, Los Angeles, California

Attendance: 16,158

Commentators: Bobby Heenan, Gorilla Monsoon

Oh boy has a lot of stuff changed here. First of all, Jesse is gone from the company and is being replaced by a revolving door of replacements. Other than that we've got Sgt. Slaughter as an anti-American world champion who needs a REAL AMERICAN to save the title for the country. There's also a retirement match here between Randy Savage and Ultimate Warrior, which might actually be better than Warrior's title win last year. Oh and there's this big guy in black that is making his Wrestlemania debut tonight. Let's get to it.

The opening video is about Hogan saving AMERICA, which is what the entire show is about. I believe the subtitle of this show is Stars and Stripes Forever, so if you can't figure out what the ending is going to be, I can't help you. Keep in mind that this was inspired by the Gulf War...which was already over but who cares about technicalities like that?

Willie Nelson sings America the Beautiful.

Hacksaw Jim Duggan is dressed like a drunk Uncle Sam and comes out for commentary for the opening match since Heenan is managing. He gives his thoughts on the main matches too.

The Rockers say they'll beat the Heenan Family.

Haku/Barbarian vs. Rockers

Shawn and Haku get us going with Michaels trying to speed things up, only to be slammed into the corner. The second attempt at flying around works a bit better as a dropkick puts Haku down. The Rockers do some of their double teaming stuff but Barbie takes them down with a big double clothesline. Shawn and Marty double superkick him down though and the Heenan Family has to regroup a bit.

We get down to Marty vs. Barbarian again and speed takes over one more time. A sunset flip doesn't work for Jannetty but Barbarian punches the mat. A rana takes Barbarian down and Marty pounds away for two. Off to Haku and a double headbutt puts Marty down again. Jannetty loads up another rana but the foreigners hit a double hot shot onto the top rope to really take over this time.

A gorilla press plants Jannetty and it's time for more heel double teaming. Marty comes back with something like a cross body for two but the speed continues to get beaten down. By speed I mean the drug of the day for Jannetty of course. Back to Barbarian for a bearhug followed by a powerslam so wicked that the fans pop for it. The falling headbutt misses though and it's hot tag time to Shawn. Things really do speed up now but Shawn gets kicked in the face to slow him down. That goes nowhere for the villains though and it's a Michaels cross body off the top for the pin on Haku.

Rating: B. Just a fast paced tag team match here with power vs. speed. This is one of those formulas that works no matter how many times you do it as long as you have talented guys in there. The future Faces of Fear were fine as monsters for the Rockers to conquer and it set a good pace for the show here. Solid opening match.

Gene is with Marla Maples (not really famous), Alex Trebek and Regis Philbin, our celebrities for tonight. Regis is scared of Earthquake, Trebek tries to make Jeopardy jokes, and Marla is still not famous. Apparently she was married to Donald Trump. Ok then.

Dino Bravo vs. Texas Tornado

Von Erich popped into the company around Summerslam, won the IC Title from Perfect, lost it and was immediately a jobber to the stars until he

went back to Texas. It's a fast brawl to start but Bravo avoids the claw. Heenan is on commentary now. Von Erich runs into a boot in the corner and Dino takes over for a bit. The side suplex puts Tornado down for two and that's about it for Bravo. A few seconds later it's Claw and Tornado Punch for the pin on Bravo.

Rating: D. Nothing at all to see here and it's a match that easily could have been cut. This was Bravo's last televised match before he left the company for good a year or so later. Afterwards he would soon be murdered in an illegal cigarette smuggling operation in Canada. Now there's a story that you can't make up.

Warlord and Slick are ready for Davey Boy.

Bulldog talks to Winston (his new dog) and says there's no bull in this bulldog.

Davey Boy Smith vs. Warlord

This is about whether or not Davey can break the full nelson. We start with our standard power stuff as they ram into each other a few times, only to have Bulldog knock Warlord out to the floor. A crucifix doesn't work for Bulldog so Warlord drops some elbows for no cover. We hit the bearhug but Bulldog punches out, only to get caught in a hot shot to keep him on the mat.

A BIG belly to belly (kind of) puts Bulldog down but again Warlord won't cover. We hit the chinlock until Bulldog fights up and hits a dropkick to send Warlord into the corner. Punches in said corner can't drop Warlord but a cross body is finally enough to get him off his feet. Warlord counters a piledriver but Bulldog counters the counter into a sunset flip for two. Bulldog misses a charge into the corner and Warlord hooks the full nelson. It looks like all hope is lost but the fingers aren't locked. Bulldog finally flips out of it and hooks the powerslam out of nowhere for the win.

Rating: C+. This would be filed under the category of "shocking the world" as it was actually a pretty solid match. Bulldog would get a lot better all of a sudden while Warlord would fall further down the card

than he already was. This was way better than I was expecting and it turned into a pretty decent power match.

Jimmy Hart and hits Nasty Boys are ready to take the tag titles from the Harts.

The Harts say good luck cracking the Foundation.

Tag Titles: Hart Foundation vs. Nasty Boys

The Nastys got hot in WCW in 1990, weren't signed to contracts, and debuted in the WWF in late 1990/early 1991. They won a tag team battle royal for this shot they're getting here. Jerry and Bret start things off and it's a quick Thesz Press to take Sags down. Brian gets knocked off the apron by the Hitman and Sags gets tripped down to the mat. No Sharpshooter yet though as Bret stomps the midsection instead.

Off to Anvil who starts powering Knobs around and pounds away in the corner. After being knocked to the floor, Brian comes right back in and is immediately caught in an armbar. The Nastys double team Neidhart in their corner to FINALLY take over, but a mat slam is enough to let Neidhart tag Bret back in. Hart tries to fight off both of the Boys, only to get decked from behind by Knobs.

Bret is sent out to the floor where he may have hurt his knee. Back inside Jerry whips him into the corner as we hit the heat section of the match. Sags hooks a reverse chinlock before Knobs comes in to do exactly the same. Back to Jerry for a neckbreaker for two and Brian breaks up a hot tag attempt. Hart breaks up a reverse chinlock by Knobs and now it's Jerry to break up another hot tag.

Brian misses a splash in the corner and Bret makes the tag but, say it with me, the referee doesn't see it. We get heel miscommunication and NOW we get a tag to Anvil. Jim cleans house and hits a quick powerslam for two on Knobs as everything breaks down. Jimmy Hart gets decked by Bret and there's a Hart Attack for Knobs. The referee tries to get Bret out and Sags decks Bret with Jimmy's helmet, giving the Nastys the titles.

Rating: B-. Another solid tag match here as the division was getting very

hot all of a sudden. The Harts would quietly split up after this with Bret moving into the IC Title picture soon thereafter. The Nastys would hold the titles over the summer before dropping them to the monsters known as the LOD at Summerslam.

Jimmy Hart's near panic attack over winning the belts is hilarious stuff.

We recap Jake Roberts vs. Rick Martel. Back in October, Roberts and Martel were on the Brother Love Show where Martel tried to spray his cologne on Damien's bag, only to hit Jake's eyes by mistake. Jake was basically blind for a few months, leading to the following blindfold match. These have never been good in the history of wrestling and I don't expect it to be here.

Jake says snakes always do it better in the dark.

Jake Roberts vs. Rick Martel

In short, they're both in hoods and neither guy can see. So the match starts and both guys point across the ring while trying to find where the other is. Martel gets down on the mat and crawls around, only to give us some stupid comedy spots with both guys tripping over the other. Rick tries a backdrop but Jake runs off to the side, showing that he can clearly see if you're thinking about this.

They miss each other in the corner a few times until Martel finally grabs him for a slam, only to miss an elbow drop. Martel gets the referee in the corner, only to realize he's grabbing a shirt. Jake uses the crowd for help by pointing and listening to the crowd cheer as he points at Martel. This continues on for awhile until Martel nearly grabs the snake bag.

The announcers continue a running joke where they can't hear each other which isn't funny. Jake gets knocked to the floor so Martel follows. He grabs a chair and pokes around with it but only hits the post. Back in and Martel takes Jake down and hooks the Boston Crab, only to have it broken quickly. Roberts grabs the DDT a second later for the pin.

Rating: F. This wasn't wrestling. It was a stupid idea with both guys

wandering around and making no contact for about seven and a half minutes before both guys hit their finishers. Thankfully this feud was done after this as I don't think the fans could stand any more of it. Oh and on top of that, Martel didn't cheat once by looking under the mask. Nice heel work there.

The Nasty Boys celebrate in the back and disgust Marla Maples.

Jimmy Snuka vs. The Undertaker

For those of you reading this now, we're currently at 20-0 and it all begins here. Taker slugs him around and rams Snuka head first into the corner a few times. The big jumping clothesline takes Snuka down and there's a quick smother by Taker. Jimmy charges into a knee in the corner and gets slammed down, only for an elbow drop to miss. Snuka chops away but misses a dive and falls to the floor. The Tombstone ends this a few seconds later.

Rating: D+. The match is just a squash but it's far more historic than anything else. Undertaker would go on to become the true Mr. Wrestlemania, never losing a single match in the entirety of his career there up to the point this is being written (2013). Snuka would fade from view soon after this.

We recap Savage vs. Warrior. Savage attacked then WWF Champion Ultimate Warrior on Saturday Night's Main Event because he wanted a title match. Queen Sherri then got on her knees in front of Warrior at the Rumble, only to be turned down again. Savage cost Warrior the title later in the night, setting up a career ending match here tonight.

Ultimate Warrior vs. Randy Savage

Before the match, Heenan spots Miss Elizabeth sitting in the crowd. Warrior only walks to the ring with a coat on instead of his usual sprint to the ring. His trunks have the WWF Title belt on the back with the words "Means much more than this". The fans HATE Savage here while Warrior gets some great pops. They lock up to start with Warrior easily shoving Randy down a few times. A shoulder does nothing for Savage so he heads to the outside.

Back in and a clothesline puts Savage down and there's an overhand choke. An atomic drop has Savage in trouble again and there's a big atomic drop for good measure. Sherri tries to interfere and is immediately knocked to the outside again. Savage gets tied up in the ropes and Warrior pounds away as this is completely one sided so far. Savage finally comes back with a clothesline but he dives off the top into a slam position, but Warrior puts him down on his feet with no slam. Now THAT is a mind game.

Macho King goes to the floor and grabs a chair which is nothing more than a distraction so that he can jump Warrior. That goes as well as anything else has for him so far with Warrior pounding away at Savage's head. Warrior stomps away in the corner as Heenan says you couldn't sneak a midget into the building. Savage falls out of the corner to avoid a charge, sending Warrior out to the floor. Sherri adds a slap to the face and there's the top rope ax handle.

Warrior gets posted and Sherri gets in a few more shots for good measure. We're told that this is the largest PPV audience in the history of pay per view. Since there's no way to know that for months, I don't think this is the case. Warrior absorbs some slams and pops up to stare Savage down. A Sherri distraction doesn't work at all and Warrior runs the ropes, only to be slammed face first down into the mat for two.

We hit the chinlock/sleeper for a bit before a double clothesline puts both guys down. Sherri tries to interfere again but the referee is taken down in the process. AGAIN the Queen interferes but accidentally takes Savage out by mistake. Warrior goes after her but gets caught in a rollup for two. Heenan is panicking over this stuff. Savage clotheslines him down and hits the flying elbow, followed by a flying elbow, followed by a flying elbow, followed by a flying elbow, followed by a flying elbow, which gets a two count in total. To say Savage is in shock is the understatement of the year.

Warrior starts shaking the ropes and hits the war path around the ring before clotheslining Savage half to death. The gorilla press and splash only get two and Warrior talks to his hands, asking if it's time for him to step aside. With Warrior on the apron, Savage decks him down to the floor as the crowd continues to be on the edges of their seats.

Savage loads up the ax handle to the barricade but Warrior hits him coming down, sending Randy crashing into the barricade. Back in and Savage can barely stand so Warrior hits two tackles to send Savage out to the floor both times. A third hits and Savage is DONE. Warrior puts his foot on the chest to end Savage's career.

Rating: A. After watching both this and Wrestlemania 6 in about three days, there is zero question as to which is the better match. This was a pair of titans colliding and one man clearly was better. That's one of the formulas that never fails if worked even mostly right and they NAILED IT here. This is by far and away Warrior's best match ever, but the best part is yet to come.

Post match Sherri gets in the ring and beats the tar out of Savage who is defenseless and can't see who it is. Elizabeth shocks everyone by jumping the guardrail and throwing Sherri to the floor in the only time I can ever remember her getting physical. Savage gets up and is SHOCKED to see Liz, who hadn't been seen in about a year. Liz says it was Sherri attacking Savage who has no idea what to do.

Liz holds out her arms and after a few moments, Savage hugs her to one of the biggest ovations you will ever hear. Savage puts Liz on his shoulder before they go to leave. As is their custom, Liz holds the ropes for him but Savage says not this time, and holds the ropes open for her. Savage gets to take a bow in the middle of the ring and the fans are thrilled. This is the only, repeat ONLY, moment in wrestling that legitimately brings a tear to my eye every time I watch it. I think that's the case for a lot of fans.

Regis Philbin is measured for a coffin by Undertaker. Regis: "We're dying out here."

Demolition is with Alex Trebek who annoys them with stupid Jeopardy talk. It's Smash and Crush at this point, managed by Mr. Fuji again.

Regis talks to Tenryu and Kitao who are here for one night only. They don't speak English so we get some racially insensitive attempts at communication.

Jake Roberts and Damien torment Trebek a bit. This is why intermission getting cut out was a good idea.

Demolition vs. Genichiro Tenryu/Koji Kitao

Now this is one of those out of nowhere matches. Demolition is on their very last toes of their very last legs here as they've even got Mr. Fuji again. Tenryu is a Japanese legend and Kitao is a big time sumo guy who became a pro and didn't do much. Kitao and Crush start things off but everything breaks down quickly. Fuji whacks Kitao in the back and Demolition takes over again. Gorilla asks what it takes to become a grand champion of sumo. Brain: "Being able to eat 1100 bowls of rice in an hour with a single chopstick."

Crush slams Kitao down and it's off to Smash. Kitao finally comes out of the corner with a clothesline and it's off to Tenryu. He speeds things up in a hurry but misses a top rope back elbow. Crush hits a backbreaker to put Tenryu down but Kitao breaks up the Decapitator. He breaks it up again and Tenryu hits a fast enziguri and powerbomb for the pin on Smash.

Rating: D+. Nothing to see here and I have no idea what the point of this match was. It's the final match for Demolition and on top of that, THIS is how you use Tenryu, a legitimate Japanese legend? The match was less than five minutes long and this is the only time I know of that Tenryu appeared for the company in a regular match for nearly two years. My guess would be this is part of the working agreement with Tenryu's SWS.

Boss Man says Heenan and his Family has nowhere else to hide tonight.

Mr. Perfect and Heenan say about what you would expect them to say about Big Boss Man.

Intercontinental Title: Big Boss Man vs. Mr. Perfect

Perfect is defending. This is an interesting yet simple idea for a story: Heenan had insulted Boss Man's mama so Boss Man swore revenge. He went after the Heenan Family and beat every single one of them until there was only Perfect left. Tonight is the final showdown. They spit at each other to start and Perfect slaps Boss Man like a schmuck. Boss Man hits him

once to knock Perfect out to the floor and there's a spin around BY THE HAIR. FREAKING OW MAN!

Boss Man speeds around the corner and hits a big clothesline to take Hennig down. Perfect gets tossed out to the floor and Boss Man is standing tall. Back in and Boss Man hits the running crotch attack to Perfect's back and whips him with a belt for good measure. Perfect finally avoids a shot and takes Boss Man down with some kicks to the ribs. Off to a chinlock with a knee in the back followed by an abdominal stretch. There's the Hennig neck snap for two and Mr. goes up, only to jump into a boot.

Perfect gets to do his reverse crotching into the post but as they go to the floor, Boss Man is whipped into the steps to take him down again. Since it was a Heenan distraction that caused the whip into the steps, here's Andre the Giant to counter the weasel. Andre picks up the belt and takes way too long to get to his position, from which he whacks Perfect in the head to knock him out cold. Boss Man covers but Haku and Barbarian run in for the DQ.

Rating: C. This wasn't great and I have no idea why they didn't change the title. The story set it up to be a title change, but I guess they were hoping for something else besides this. What that was I have no idea as Boss Man would never come close to the title again. The match was decent enough all things considered though.

Boss Man and Andre clean house post match.

Donald Trump, Chuck Norris, Lou Ferrigno and Henry Winkler are here. Yep, the Fonz showed up at Wrestlemania.

Earthquake vs. Greg Valentine

Valentine turned face a few months ago and this is his big match for the forces of good. We're 20 seconds in and Valentine is getting powerslammed down for two. A splash misses in the corner and Valentine gets him down to one knee. Quake breaks the Figure Four twice, hits a big elbow and drops the Earthquake for the pin.

Rating: F+. Earthquake was pretty much done as a singles guy at this point but I'm assuming he got some shots at Hogan on house shows over the summer. Other than that though this was a filler match that didn't need to be on the card at all. Nothing to see here but at least Quake looked dominant.

The LOD says Power and Glory will be sour and gory after the match.

Power and Glory vs. Legion of Doom

Hercules is sent to the floor and it's a Doomsday Device to end Roma in less than a minute. They were clearly coming for the belts very soon.

We recap Virgil vs. Ted DiBiase. Basically Virgil spent years serving DiBiase and FINALLY snapped on him at the Royal Rumble, setting up this match tonight. Roddy Piper is Virgil's mentor here too.

Virgil vs. Ted DiBiase

Virgil gets one of the three big pops of his entire career here, with the first being when he finally hit DiBiase with the belt. The other will be in less than ten minutes. Virgil pounds away to start and sends Ted out to the floor. Back in and Ted hits a clothesline but an elbow misses a second later. DiBiase, the wrestler, easily takes Virgil down and hits a suplex for two. Things are REALLY slow now compared to just a few moments before. We head to the floor for a bit with DiBiase shoving down Piper, who was on crutches at this point. DiBiase talks some trash so Piper pulls the top rope down but the distraction is enough for a countout.

Rating: D. This was all story but it really should have been Virgil pinning DiBiase, even on a rollup. These two would continue to feud with Virgil actually taking the Million Dollar Title at Summerslam 1991. The problem with Virgil was that after the DiBiase feud, there was nothing for him to do at all. The match was really dull and didn't have the payoff it needed at the end.

DiBiase puts Virgil in the Million Dollar Dream post match but Piper hits him with the crutch to break it up. Queen Sherri comes out to help with a beatdown of Piper, as she is now managing DiBiase. Referees come out to

break it up until Virgil makes the save. Virgil tells Piper to get up, as Piper had told him over the last few months.

We get a clip of Slaughter and General Adnan burning a Hogan t-shirt.

Slaughter threatens to get himself disqualified to keep the title. We get a clip of Slaughter beating up Hogan and Duggan as Slaughter laughs evilly.

The Mountie vs. Tito Santana

Tito chases him around to start and beats him up a bit, only to get caught in the ribs with Mountie's shock stick, ending this in less than 90 seconds.

Hogan gives his prematch interview, talking about how much he loves AMERICA and how he's got new weapons. We get a clip of Slaughter and Adnan beating Hogan down but he promises to do it for his country.

Here are the celebrities: Regis is on commentary, Marla Maples is the timekeeper and Alex Trebek is ring announcer.

WWF World Title: Sgt. Slaughter vs. Hulk Hogan

Hogan immediately chases Slaughter around the ring until Adnan is put on the floor. Feeling out process to start with both guys going into the corner. Hulk hooks a headlock to no avail but sends Slaughter backwards with a shoulder block. The champ hits one of the weakest chair shots you'll ever see to Hogan's back and pokes Hulk in the eye to finally take over. Hogan comes back with a clothesline and decks Adnan for fun too. A backdrop puts Slaughter down and Hulk sends him into the post.

Hogan hits a jumping knee to the back to send Slaughter into the corner and a slingshot sends Slaughter into the buckle again. Hogan gets in his ten punches in the corner for two but goes to the middle rope of all places, but Adnan breaks it up. Slaughter gets slammed down and Hulk drops a bunch of elbows. Now Hogan goes up top (!) but gets slammed to the mat and clotheslined to the floor. A better but still lame chair shot puts Hogan down again and it's time to work on the back.

A backbreaker gets two for the champion and he stomps away on Hulk's back. There's a Boston Crab but Hulk is right next to the rope, making this pretty worthless. Another backbreaker gets two and it's a third chair shot, this time to the head, gets two more. Hulk is cut over the eye. There's Slaughter's Camel Clutch but Hulk fights up, only to be rammed into the corner to send him right back down. Slaughter puts an Iraqi flag on Hogan and you know what's coming now. A Hulk Up, big boot and leg drop later and AMERICA REIGNS AGAIN!

Rating: C. At the end of the day, if you didn't know what was going to happen here then you're either very young or have no idea how wrestling works. On top of the story, it's Hogan in a match against a big man. What else could you possibly expect? Hogan winning is the 100% right decision and the match certainly isn't bad. Slaughter was clearly a short term champion and there's nothing wrong with that either. Decent stuff here and a feel good moment to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. Oddly enough, this wasn't too bad. There's some lame stuff but for the most part it's very short with only Jake vs. Martel being both bad and longer than five minutes. Other than that you get a very fun opener, a masterpiece in the retirement match, a feel good main event and some other solid stuff. If you shave off about half an hour of this, which could easily be done by dropping about three matches, this show goes WAY up in value. Still though, it's worth checking out if you haven't seen it in a long time.

Ratings Comparison

Rockers vs. Haku/Barbarian

Original: B

Redo: B

Texas Tornado vs. Dino Bravo

Original: F

Redo: D

British Bulldog vs. Warlord

Original: B-

Redo: C+

Nasty Boys vs. Hart Foundation

Original: C-

Redo: B-

Jake Roberts vs. Rick Martel

Original: F

Redo: F

Undertaker vs. Jimmy Snuka

Original: D+

Redo: D+

Ultimate Warrior vs. Randy Savage

Original: A+

Redo: A

Genichiro Tenryu/Koji Kitao vs. Demolition

Original: W (For What were they thinking)

Redo: D+

Big Boss Man vs. Mr. Perfect

Original: C-

Redo: C

Earthquake vs. Greg Valentine

Original: N/A

Redo: F+

Legion of Doom vs. Power and Glory

Original: N/A

Redo: N/A

Virgil vs. Ted DiBiase

Original: C-

Redo: D

The Mountie vs. Tito Santana

Original: N/A

Redo: N/A

Hulk Hogan vs. Sgt. Slaughter

Original: C+

Redo: C

Overall Rating

Original: C

Redo: B-

These things need to be different already.

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/03/14/history-of-wrestlemania-with-kb-wrestlemania-7-wrestlemania-goes-patriotic/>

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