

Smackdown – July 5, 2001: That's A Bad Sign

Smackdown

Date: July 5, 2001

Location: Tacoma Dome, Tacoma, Washington

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jim Ross

This is another old request as I try to knock some of my way too long list down. We're very early into the Invasion and Steve Austin is currently out due to an injury and is sitting in Vince McMahon's office singing campfire songs with Kurt Angle, who has basically decided he's Austin's best friend. Let's get to it.

The opening recap looks at Torrie Wilson trying to seduce Vince to get a contract, only to have Linda catch them in a scene that wasn't very funny. This is in no way a reason for Vince to get physical with Torrie Wilson in a swimsuit top.

Opening sequence.

Tag Team Titles: Chris Jericho/Spike Dudley vs. Dudley Boyz

Bubba and D-Von are defending as Spike tries to find someone to help fight off his brothers, who don't like him dating Molly Holly. This is another sign of the times as you would just have random title matches on TV instead of spending weeks setting up a title match on pay per view. D-Von and Jericho start things off with Jericho scoring off some chops. A springboard dropkick sends D-Von outside and Spike dives on both Dudleys. Well the other Dudleys that is. I can assure you he didn't dive on himself.

Back in and Spike plays D-Von in What's Up to D-Von but the Dudley Dawg is easily broken up. It's time for Spike to get beaten down, including an awesome double flapjack to send him crashing to the mat in a great looking landing. D-Von misses a middle rope legdrop and the hot tag brings in Jericho to clean house. Jericho can't keep the Walls on though

as D-Von makes a quick save, leaving Spike to come in instead. A quick 3D ends Spike to retain the titles.

Rating: C-. That flapjack alone makes this match go up in value. I mean Spike just slammed into that mat and landed on his face. How can you not love that? Jericho vs. the Dudley Boyz wasn't the most interesting feud and it didn't do much other than fill in a little time before he moved on to the big time with the invasion.

Jericho clears the ring post match.

Austin and Debra come in to see Vince, who rants against Torrie for what happened on Monday. Debra blames Vince but Austin has a present to make things better. Vince opens the big red box and it's.....a cowboy hat. Austin has one of his own but Angle comes in and feels left out. There's one more box though and it's a smaller hat, just for Kurt, who has never been happier. Austin looks like he wants to kill him. Then why did Austin buy the hat? This was an awkward phase of comedy but they're nailing the timing and it's actually really funny stuff.

Earlier today the WWF and WCW referees got in a fight, which actually set up a pay per view match for reasons I don't want to comprehend.

Crash Holly vs. Jacqueline

Crash knocks her around to start but they head outside with Jacqueline sending him shoulder first into the post. Back in and we hit the armbar for a bit before Crash gets two off a northern lights suplex. Crash gets crotched on the top and a super hurricanrana gives Jacqueline the pin.

Rating: D-. This was a stretch when Jacqueline was wrestling various men despite there being no real reason to see her do so. Basically it was a way to show off how awesome she was (quite the stretch) and, again, no one was really all that interested. This would happen from time to time and the fact that it never lead anywhere didn't seem to change much.

Trish (looking GREAT here) comes in to thank Jeff Hardy for saving her from Big Show. Lita and Matt come in to make her leave. Jeff thinks there's nothing wrong with this, which might have something to do with

Trish kissing Matt last week.

We look back at Austin, Angle and WCW wrestler Buff Bagwell beating down WCW World Champion Booker T. Austin and Angle beat Bagwell down and threw him outside.

Various wrestlers, many of them who used to work in WCW, laugh at Booker for taking such a beating. Booker says he's ready to defend his title tonight.

Vince gets a summons about a settlement with Linda. Austin blames Angle and wants his hat back but Angle calls him an Indian giver.

WCW Cruiserweight Title: Billy Kidman vs. Gregory Helms

This is a WCW match complete with graphics and Scott Hudson and Arn Anderson on commentary. Helms used to be Gregory but we can't have two Shanes on the roster. The announcers talk about Booker defending the WCW World Title tonight and ignore the match to really make this feel like something out of WCW. Helms is sent to the floor and taken down with a dive.

Back in and Kidman is hiptossed out for a big crash. Anderson rips on the cowboy hot segment as Kidman gets beaten down even more. A BK Bomb (Sky High) gets two but the shooting star misses. The Nightmare on Helm Street gets two and a modified Kid Crusher (basically the Killswitch) gives us a new champion.

Rating: C+. The match was what you would expect from these two but the crowd just did not care and I can't really blame them. These fans have no reason to care about WCW or its titles because that's not what they came here to see. Kidman and Helms are very talented but there's no connection to them for the WWF fans. Build these guys up under the WWF banner and then do the big war.

Vince blames women for his problems and Debra is incensed. His plan is to explain to the people and everything will be ok. Angle thinks telling the truth is the answer, just like he learned in the Boy Scouts.

Christian has Edge's King of the Ring trophy ready for Edge's

Intercontinental Title shot tonight. Apparently Edge would rather Christian stay in the back though and Christian looks disappointed. You can see the split coming and it's really well done so far.

Here's Vince to talk about what's been happening to him recently. See, when you die you leave a good or a bad reputation behind. Linda would like you to believe that he has a bad reputation because he's a womanizer and a skirt chaser. Just for the record he wasn't going to go that far with Torrie because he was just testing her loyalty. Yeah that's it. On July 23 he has to appear before a judge about division of assets with Linda and right now he'd like to say he's sorry. Vince drops to a knee and apologizes to everyone and IS THERE A POINT TO THIS COMING ANYTIME SOON???

William Regal and Tajiri come out and beg Vince to get up because it's not his fault. Vince hugs Regal and we cut to Austin and Angle looking stunned. It's not Vince's fault that women are so attracted to him or that he's a self made billionaire. He's Vince McMahon and he's proud of it. Again, if anyone can explain the point of this to me, I'd love to hear it and tell you that it's nothing more than an excuse for Vince to take up more TV time.

Hardy Boyz vs. Big Show/Billy Gunn

Apparently Billy and Big Show think everyone is against them. Right. Billy charges into an armdrag and Matt grabs an armbar. It's off to Jeff (wearing a hat) for two off Poetry in Motion. Big Show and his one piece women's swimsuit come in for the Alley Oop (lifts Jeff for a powerbomb but falls backwards to send Jeff face first into the mat). Show takes a ridiculous amount of time going to the middle rope, allowing Jeff to avoid an elbow drop.

The hot tag brings in Matt (European Champion, which isn't important enough to mention until nearly the end of the match) who is quickly launched out to the floor. Lita uses the distraction to hit the hurricanrana on Billy, allowing Jeff to hit a missile dropkick on Big Show. The Twist of Fate/Swanton/legdrop crush Show but Billy comes back in with his cobra clutch slam to give Show the pin on Matt.

Rating: D. For the life of me I do not get the obsession with pushing Billy Gunn outside of his most popular character. He's just a guy who has a look and almost nothing more. If Big Show and Billy Gunn are the best they can do for a tag team at this point, they might as well just have the Hardys feud with Edge and Christian and the Dudleys forever because there's nothing worth seeing here. Well other than Lita of course.

Vince tells Angle/Austin/Tajiri/Regal that he's taking the night off and going to a bar. Actually, Tajiri can come with him. I'm assuming Tajiri will put a shirt on at some point. The two of them leave so Austin and Angle can yell at Regal for hugging Vince without their permission. Austin and Angle get in an argument over who makes the other sicker.

Intercontinental Title: Albert vs. Edge

Believe it or not (and I'm not sure why you wouldn't), Albert is defending. You can tell how much this match matters as the video during the entrances is about Undertaker (who challenges for the title on Monday) vs. Diamond Dallas Page. Before the match, Edge rips on Albert's X Factor theme (I always liked it) to tick the monster off. Edge has to fight out of the Baldo Bomb (chokebomb) but eats a bicycle kick square to the hands.

We hit a backbreaker, which Tazz informs us works on the back. A torture rack neckbreaker gets two for the champ and it's off to a bearhug (which also works on the back). Albert misses a splash and Edge grabs the Edge-O-Matic for no cover. Instead he goes up and scores with the missile dropkick but Albert hits him low and grabs the Baldo Bomb to retain.

Rating: C. I have no idea why but I remember thinking Albert was a cool choice for the Intercontinental Title. It wasn't going to last much longer as it would be sacrificed on the altar of the invasion but at least they gave the belt to someone fresh. You can only have Jericho, Angle, Edge and Benoit hold the thing for so long before it's time for some new blood.

The locker room apologizes to Test for beating him up (as they thought he was a WCW mole) when Austin comes in to tell them to get together and fight the bacteria that is WCW. They can start tonight by beating up

Booker T. Angle praises Austin and says Steve could beat up Booker T. and everyone else in this room, thereby screwing up the plan. Austin stares at him and throws his hat down.

Scotty 2 Hotty vs. Dean Malenko

Scotty is recently back from an injury. Malenko has Perry Saturn and Terri with him. Things start fast with Scotty armdragging Dean a few times but missing a dropkick. Malenko starts in on the leg but the Cloverleaf goes on too close to the ropes. Scotty's rollup gets two but he gets knocked to the floor with a clothesline but Dean is down as well. Cue Saturn with Scotty's hat to try the Worm on Dean (just go with it), only to have Scotty come back in and hit the real thing for the pin.

Rating: D+. Uh....yeah. Saturn being insane was funny and stayed entertaining enough for a long time though Malenko having character stuff like this wasn't the best idea. I mean, it's better than having him be a ladies man and all that (save for the Lita vignettes) but he really wasn't cut out for the WWF in general.

A WCW referee wishes Page luck but Page talks about wanting to go after Undertaker and/or Kane.

We look back at last week's Tough Enough. HHH will be on the show after Smackdown tonight and gave a speech that I believe talked a buddy of mine out of wanting to wrestle.

Austin yells at Angle and Debra about various things and is ready to beat up Booker T. Angle wants to bounce Booker around like a pogo stick so Steve sends him out to break Booker's ankle. Angle: "Hold onto my hat."

WCW World Title: Diamond Dallas Page vs. Booker T.

Page is challenging and it's another full on WCW match. By that I mean WCW logos with graphics nowhere near as good as the company had and a commentary team that never did commentary for them. Page jumps the champ during his entrance but gets elbowed out to the floor in something that looked edited. Back in and the Diamond Cutter is broken up but Booker gets dropped face first onto the buckle.

They head outside again with Page being thrown over the announcers' table and then into the crowd despite a lack of any real personal issue between them to warrant this kind of violence. Page takes over and stomps on Booker's hand back inside. A good looking Batista Bomb gets two on Booker and sets off his comeback, including the ax kick. Page bails to the floor and sends Booker into the steps before grabbing a chair. The referee is shoved down (DQ? Anyone?) and a DDT onto the chair gives Page two. Cue the Undertaker for a distraction and Booker rolls Page up to retain.

Rating: B-. Good match and all but again there's almost no reason for the fans to care. As far as WWF fans are concerned, these are brand new wrestlers who just happen to be fighting over a title. I'm sure a lot of them know who these two are but that doesn't mean they want to see a title match here. If they did, they probably would have watched Nitro more often.

Undertaker chases Page off and here's Angle to go after Booker. An ax kick puts Angle down and there's a belt shot to the face.

We go to the parking lot where the WCW guys jump Undertaker but can't even knock him off his feet. Eight guys pounding on him and barely having any effect should tell you all you need to know about this story. They FINALLY get him down but WCW owner Shane McMahon comes in for the save, only to have Page beat him up too. Booker calls them off and gets beaten down as well to end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. The show wasn't bad and the Austin/Angle comedy stuff is oddly hilarious but this WCW story is clearly dead in the water. You can blame it on probably a dozen factors but a lot of it comes down to people not wanting to see WCW wrestlers on the WWF show. If I didn't want to watch WCW with all of its star power, why would I care about Booker T., Diamond Dallas Page as a character so different from what made him famous and then everyone else that just happens to be there? Things are only going to get worse from here but they're really not off to a good start.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book, KB's WWE Grab Bag at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B01IH70904>

And check out my Amazon author page with cheap wrestling books at:

<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>