

Monday Night Raw – March 6, 1995: The First Of So Many

Monday Night Raw

Date: March 6, 1995

Location: Macon Coliseum, Macon, Georgia

Attendance: 2,751

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Jim Cornette

We'll jump back to 1995 and the build to the horrible Wrestlemania XI. Shawn Michaels won the Royal Rumble back in January but things aren't over yet as he has to deal with the British Bulldog, who Shawn last eliminated to win the Wrestlemania title shot. Other than that we're still setting up the real main event and it's likely we'll hear something about that here. Let's get to it.

We open with clips of the Wrestlemania press conference which certainly doesn't exist solely for the sake of sports reporters hearing from Lawrence Taylor.

Opening sequence.

Shawn Michaels vs. British Bulldog

Shawn has Sid in his corner. Smith shoulders him down a few times to start and an atomic drop (Cornette: "HE HAD PLANS TONIGHT!") sends Shawn outside. Back in and Shawn gets caught in a headlock as they clearly have a lot of time to use here. Shawn reverses into a short arm scissors but, after a commercial (making me think there wasn't a lot missing during the break) with the hold still on, we get the same counter that Bulldog has always used as he muscles Shawn up into a powerbomb for the escape.

We hit a surfboard on Shawn before Bulldog backdrops him to the floor...but Sid catches him. That's certainly guarding the body. The delayed vertical suplex gets two before Shawn sends him outside to possibly injure Bulldog's knee. Back in and we hit the chinlock on Bulldog for a LONG time until a belly to back suplex breaks things up.

We take another break and come back with Shawn sending him into the corner, only to miss a charge. Bulldog crotches him on the top (I understand he had plans tonight) but goes flying through the ropes for one of the softest bumps you'll see in a long time. Back in again and Shawn hits the superkick for the pin. More on that in a second.

Rating: C. This is a good example of a match that is much longer than good which tends to get confused from time to time. While it might not have been the best match (though it's far from bad), this did a few things in one match and both of them helped Shawn as he was heading into the World Title match at Wrestlemania.

First of all, it gets rid of the Bulldog as an obstacle in Shawn's way. While it's not much, there's no need to have Bulldog's grudge hanging around after the Rumble. A clean(ish) pin for Shawn gets rid of that and lets him focus on Diesel and Diesel alone. The other is a big more historic.

That was one of the first times Shawn had won a big match with the superkick. Now instead of having to use that stupid teardrop suplex, Shawn can kick Diesel in the face to possibly win the title. That alone is the way to get someone ready for a major match and wound up being one of the most successful finishers of all time. No one knew it yet but they just witnessed history.

Long video on the Wrestlemania press conference with a bunch of bored reporters listening to Shawn and Diesel talk about their match before they hear from Taylor. After that eats up a bunch of time, we hear about all of the celebrities who will be around, headlined by Pamela Anderson.

Video on the Fan Festival, which is like the grandfather of Axxess.

Bob Backlund vs. Buck Quartermaine

Buck won't shake hands to start so the announcers talk about all the NFL stars scheduled to be in Taylor's corner at Wrestlemania. Backlund armdrags him down as Cornette wants Taylor to "strap a bucket of fried chicken around his back and ride a motorcycle across Ethiopia." I could listen to that man all day.

As Backlund grabs a test of strength, Vince announces Backlund vs. Hart for Wrestlemania in an I Quit match. I love it when they just throw a match out there like that during another match. It doesn't need to be some big segment because you can just do something like this to the same reaction. Buck actually drops him with a shoulder and gets two off a small package. Vince still thinks Buck might get the pin even after the hold has been broken. The Crossface Chickenwing puts Buck away with ease.

Rating: D-. Way longer than it needed to be here but again I really like the idea that they had a match going instead of stopping everything for the sake of announcing a match. Backlund was certainly winding down at this point and the Bret match at Wrestlemania would pretty much be it for him as a full time guy though he would be around for over another year.

Recap of Bret Hart vs. Jerry Lawler, who face off again next week. This time Lawler is calling Bret a racist for reasons.

Stephen Dunn vs. Duke Droese

Duke, the garbageman, starts working on Dunn's arm as Lawler calls in to insult the Hart Family even more. Jerry promises proof that Bret is a racist as Dunn suplexes Duke for no cover. Vince finally hangs up on him as Dunn is actually still in control. Back up and Dunn charges into a boot in the corner, setting up a powerslam to give Droese the pin.

Rating: D-. How bad do you have to be to be the surviving member of Well Dunn? Droese is a great example of one of those characters that existed on a single note and nothing more. Why should I like or dislike him? He's a garbageman. What makes him good or bad other than his rather generic actions? This happened way too often in the WWF at this point and it made for a bad period.

Dunn goes after Duke's garbage can but there's \$100 inside.

An actor from NYPD Blue accuses Paul Bearer and Mr. Fuji of kidnapping/murdering Yokozuna. For reasons I don't want to understand, both managers wind up in drag.

A 45 second highlight package takes us out.

Overall Rating: C-. This was basically Shawn vs. Bulldog and then whatever else they could get to fill in the rest of the hour. This was clearly not a good time for the company though as you had Shawn vs. Diesel and then a bunch of weak celebrities who weren't going to do much for the audience. Bret vs. Lawler should be good though so at least there's something to look forward to.

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