

Monday Night Raw – October 14, 1996: Rock Bottom

Monday Night Raw

Date: October 14, 1996

Location: Hersheypark Arena, Hershey, Pennsylvania

Attendance: 3,923

Commentators: Kevin Kelly, Jim Ross

It's the go home show for Buried Alive but more importantly than that we have a major showdown with Steve Austin vs. Shawn Michaels in a non-title match. I really don't think a show needs much more than that but we're also going to get the blowoff between Jerry Lawler and Jake Roberts in the Roberts is a drunk angle. Let's get to it.

The opening video looks at Austin vs. Michaels.

Opening sequence.

Phineas Godwinn vs. Vader

There are A TON of empty seats opposite the camera, as in to the degree that WCW would laugh at them over it. Vader pounds him into the corner and onto the floor to start as JR goes on another rant against Vince which wouldn't go anywhere since Vince would be back on commentary the next week. Cue Sid to distract Vader, allowing Phineas to run him over with a clothesline. Vader is knocked outside for a bit before Phineas hits an impressive slam. The Slop Drop doesn't work as Vader grabs the rope and the Vader Bomb ends this a few seconds later.

Rating: D. Another not great match here but at least they kept it short so all the fans left in the arena won't fall asleep in their chairs. Vader vs. Sid isn't an interesting match for the pay per view with Sid popping up after that splash last week but maybe they can have the match that Starrcade couldn't pull off back in 1993.

Here's Mr. Perfect for a chat. He's ready for a challenge from Hunter

Hearst Helmsley and he'll be right here next week to face him one on one. Not much to say here but keep an eye on this one.

Jerry Lawler vs. Jake Roberts

Lawler comes out for his pre-match comedy routine but JR WILL NOT SHUT UP about how much he hates doing commentary with Vince. Jake finally stumbles out with a paper bag behind his back and JR messes it up again by saying "If I didn't know any better, I'd think he's drunk!". Lawler keeps making jokes and here's Gorilla Monsoon to say Roberts can't wrestle. With Lawler's back turned, Jake stands up straight and tells Gorilla that he's fine. They actually take a break and come back with Jake hitting the DDT for the pin in thirty seconds. Good grief they managed to screw up the fake drunk idea twice in a single match!

Post match Jake pours whiskey onto Jerry's face and wraps the snake around him.

More from Jesse Jammes, who is re-releasing With My Baby Tonight later this year. Jim Johnston (third Double J in this story) is impressed with his talents you see.

Freddie Joe Floyd vs. Hunter Hearst Helmsley

I would bring up JR complaining about Vince again but the point is buried into the ground by now. Helmsley actually handcuffs his valet to the ring so Mr. Perfect can't come out and woo her away again. That's actually kind of awesome. Floyd takes him to the mat to start and grabs a headlock before Helmsley pounds him down with forearms in the corner.

Cue Mr. Perfect as Helmsley gets in a suplex and he just happens to have a key. Freddie hammers away as Perfect leaves with the lady. The Pedigree finally plants Floyd but HHH goes after perfect and gets punched in the face for the countout. So the referee was paying enough attention to count but not enough to see him get knocked down?

Rating: D. All storyline here as Perfect vs. HHH is turning into a great midcard story and a really strong example of what a veteran rub can do for someone like HHH. It might not be the best match but above all else

it's making HHH look important which is more anything else he's done since his debut.

Austin is ready to beat Shawn tonight as a message to Bret Hart.

Here's Sunny to debut a massive poster of herself. JR: "We're wasting time here."

Mankind says he'll win on Sunday.

Faarooq vs. The Pug

Sunny is on commentary and hits on Kevin Kelly until he says he "does ok" financially. Now JR rips on Vince for Faarooq's stupid looking headgear. Ok I'll give him that one. A spinebuster and the Dominator end Pug in a hurry.

We see Faarooq and Ahmed Johnson having an argument over the phone earlier this week on Livewire.

Undertaker says it's the calm before the storm.

Steve Austin vs. Shawn Michaels

Non-title. Austin takes him into the corner to start and we cut to Cornette and Vader watching in the back. Cornette promises to crush Sid on Sunday and Vader barks a lot because he's a bit out there. They trade hammerlocks early on with Shawn holding him down with a headlock.

Now we go to Sid who is WAY too excited to go to Buried Alive to face Vader for the title shot. Shawn grabs a chinlock for a bit before a pinfall reversal sequence sends Austin to the floor for a breather. Back in and the Stun Gun slows Shawn down but it's too early for the Stunner. We take a break and come back with Vader coming in for the DQ less than thirty seconds later.

Rating: D+. This wasn't designed to be anything more than an overhyped match with the rug being pulled out from underneath the fans. In other words it was a WCW style match and those have very rarely felt like anything important. These two would have a few more important matches but

this wasn't a great starting point for them.

Savio Vega comes in and is quickly dispatched but here's Sid to clear the ring. Fake Diesel and Fake Razor come out to watch as Shawn and Sid yell at each other. Austin and Vader get back in and are dispatched again to end the show.

Overall Rating: D-. These shows are just horrible and it definitely starting to take its toll with this show drawing the lowest rating (1.78) in the history of the show. People were just not liking what they were selling at this point and it was high time to change things up, which is exactly what would happen next week. The less said about this show the better though.

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