

Monday Night Raw – July 8, 1996: The Other Third Man

Monday Night Raw

Date: July 8, 1996

Location: Brown County Expo, Green Bay, Wisconsin

Attendance: 4,660

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Jerry Lawler

We're coming up on In Your House IX, which was barely mentioned last week. To be fair though, it's not like anyone cared about that waste of a show so they might as well just punt for the next two weeks and be done with it. The big deal this week is Ultimate Warrior's last appearance for nearly 18 years due to him leaving the company (again) before this was taped, meaning he's making "one last special appearance" here. Let's get to it.

WWF President Gorilla Monsoon suspends Ultimate Warrior indefinitely for not appearing at house shows. He can come back if he posts an appearance bond to guarantee that he'll show up as advertised in the future. Oh but he's here tonight to face Owen Hart.

Opening sequence.

Ultimate Warrior vs. Owen Hart

Owen is sent outside to start and let's go to Shawn Michaels and Ahmed Johnson to ask who they'll be teaming with on Sunday. We'll find that out later so we'll look at Warrior slamming Owen instead and then clotheslining him out to the floor. A side slam plants Owen before Warrior no sells a spinwheel kick. Owen stomps away and we take a break. Back with Owen stomping even more and hitting a loud enziguri for no cover. A missile dropkick (Owen really likes using his feet) gets two and the knockout sends Owen out to the floor. Here's the British Bulldog as Warrior Hulks Up, only to have Bulldog come in for the DQ.

Rating: C+. So that's it for the Warrior, who left because his dad died,

despite not really having anything to do with his dad for years. This got really nasty between Warrior and the company and led to them having no relationship for the better part of twenty years. Yeah Warrior was basically nuts but they completely buried him on the way out, which is rather petty.

Camp Cornette destroys Warrior post match and that's that.

Shawn and Ahmed promise to reveal the third man. This has to be a bit of a rib or something at Hogan's expense right? I mean it's not funny (nor is it meant to be) but I'm sure there's something there.

Savio Vega vs. Justin Hawk Bradshaw

Brian Pillman tries to jump Savio but gets held back. They slug it out to start with Savio hitting a spinwheel kick over the corner, only to get caught in a bulldog (required move for almost all Texans, or at least cowboys). Another slugout goes nowhere until Uncle Zebekiah punches Savio in the ribs. Lawler thinks John Travolta is the third man and Vince's reaction is exactly what you would expect.

We hit the sleeper on Savio but Bradshaw switches over to a chinlock to really mix things up. The discussion moves on to the third man, which turns into an Abbott and Costello routine. It's back to the sleeper for a long time so now let's have a phone call from Mr. Perfect to give the announcers ANYTHING else to talk about. We take a break and come back with Mr. Perfect gone and Bradshaw hitting a pumphandle slam. This match just keeps going as Savio avoids a charge and gets in a suplex to put both guys down. Zebekiah grabs the wrong foot and Savio hits a leg lariat to FINALLY end this.

Rating: D-. Sweet goodness what a mess. This is the definition of a match that just keeps going and serves no purpose other than filling in time on a show that isn't interesting in the first place. That's the major problem around this time: there's nothing interesting about these two fighting because there's no reason for them to have a fifteen minute match. Why would I want to sit and watch a long match with no story between uninteresting characters?

Zebekiah and Bradshaw use various cowboy instruments to beat Savio down.

Shawn and Ahmed still won't say who it is.

Clips from a rally before a show.

British Bulldog/Yokozuna vs. Godwinns

Jim Cornette sits in on commentary and promises a lawsuit due to the Godwinns' animals. Henry runs Bulldog over to start but Vader comes in to destroy him. Cornette tries to figure out the Warrior suspension angle and says Warrior is running from Camp Cornette but it didn't work either. Henry actually suplexes Vader before shouldering the monster down. It's off to Phineas for a horrible looking splash so Vader takes his head off with a clothesline.

Bulldog comes in and gets caught in a bulldog (make your own joke) as the slow brawling continues. We hit a chinlock on Henry before Bulldog just hits him in the back a few times. This match just keeps going as Vader hits a splash for two as Vince tells us that we can't get a promised Undertaker video. Maybe you should cut down on fifteen minute Bradshaw vs. Vega match. The Vader Bomb crushes Henry and we take a break. You know, because Vader's finisher can't beat HENRY GODWINN.

Back with Bulldog suplexing Henry for two and bringing Vader back in to keep this going. Henry actually catches a charging Vader in a powerslam, drawing Cornette off commentary and into his manager's role. The un-hot tag brings in Phineas as Cornette is back on commentary and calling his team idiots. Everything breaks down and Bulldog hits the powerslam (without even running) for the pin on Phineas.

Rating: D. Again just long here in a match that could have wrapped up about ten minutes earlier than it should have. Somehow this was an upgrade over the previous match though, perhaps due to Bulldog and Vader being a lot more entertaining than Vega or Bradshaw. This really could have been better if they just cut off about five minutes but this is what we're stuck with because Raw sucks.

Jim Cornette isn't worried about the new partner so Shawn and Ahmed bring

in Sid to send Cornette through the roof to end the show.

Overall Rating: D-. Another way too long and boring show with a bunch of matches that fans weren't interested in seeing and a really bad way of sending Warrior off. The Sid idea was about as good as they were going to get and I'm fine with the WHO IS THE THIRD MAN thing as they did it for one night and made it fine enough to work. This cycle can't end soon enough though so we can get on to the Summerslam build.

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