

Monday Night Raw – June 10, 2002 (2016 Redo): A Missing Rattlesnake, An Owner and One Disgusting Promo

Monday Night Raw

Date: June 10, 2002

Location: Phillips Arena, Atlanta, Georgia

Attendance: 8,000

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

Steve Austin is gone and he's not coming back for a long time. Austin walked out of the company earlier in the day before this show due to not wanting to lose to Brock Lesnar in a King of the Ring qualifying match with no build. He had been unhappy for a long time and this was the breaking point, meaning most of the show had to be rewritten at the last minute. There's not much of a point in recapping most of what's going on because everything is changing here so let's get to it.

Before we get to the show, let's talk about Austin a little more. There are two major points to get out of the way here: Austin was completely unprofessional by leaving like he did but he was absolutely right with a lot of his complaints. Let's look at the second part first. Austin losing to Lesnar in a one off match on Raw would have been a very, very stupid move and a huge waste of money. While he wasn't the star he once was, Austin was the undisputed biggest name on Raw and a win over him, no matter how it was attained, would be a big deal.

Austin has said (albeit years later) that he had no problem putting Lesnar over but he had a problem with doing it on Raw with no build. Put this up on a pay per view with a regular build and it's going to draw money. Putting it on a nothing Raw in a qualifying match (Austin vs. Lesnar should have been a featured match, as in the tournament final and one of the show's main events) was very shortsighted and fairly insulting

to Austin at the same time.

On top of that, Austin had been doing some really stupid angles over the last few weeks. Whether it was the WAY too long feud with the NWO or relieving himself on Arn Anderson or probably making Ric Flair clean the toilets, Austin was a pretty long way away from his must see war against Vince McMahon and headlining Wrestlemania with the Rock. Austin deserved better than this and should have been in the World Title picture instead of taking care of all these people in Raw in a glorified midcard role.

All that being said, no one has the right to walk out on a show, especially when he was advertised as the big draw of the night. It's insulting to the company but more importantly to the fans who paid to see Austin that night. Maybe Austin was looking for an excuse to get out or he finally snapped but there's no excuse for what he did, especially with the way he was barely in contact for several months after walking out. Maybe this will be better for Raw in the long term, but give the company a way to write him off TV and not be forced into a bait and switch. It's a bad moment all around and no one looks great but Austin looks worse.

Anyway, on with the show.

Opening sequence.

Here's Ric Flair to open the show. As he makes his way to the ring, JR makes the first Austin reference by talking about the personal assistant story. Flair recaps the story and says he isn't happy about it but Austin isn't here tonight. Before he can elaborate further, here's Vince McMahon to interrupt. Vince talks about Austin walking out and you can tell the fans are rather taken aback by the news. As for Flair, he's driven Raw into the toilet and sucks as an owner. Flair: "I'm sorry."

Ric wants to know what Flair plans to do about it so we hear about Vince's career resume. Vince gets to the point (how nice of him): tonight, one match between the two of them, no holds barred, winner take all. Flair takes off the jacket and calls Vince a Nature Boy wannabe. The match is on and Flair has just completed one of the most rushed face turns in recorded history.

Earlier today Shawn Michaels wouldn't let the rest of the NWO into the locker room so they read the paper instead. Big Show has some stomach issues due to eating Mexican food. Booker winds up singing Shawn's theme song and wants to "collabroatize" with Shawn over the lyrics. That goes nowhere so Booker sings his own version of Shawn's song.

Spike Dudley/Shawn Stasiak/Tommy Dreamer vs. NWO

Booker/X-Pac/Show here and Christopher Nowitzki is sitting in the front row. X-Pac powerbombs Spike to start and fires off the kicks in the corner. Stasiak and Show come in for the expected dominance but we cut to Nash and Shawn watching in the back. It's off to Dreamer with his bucket and it's full of confetti. Booker takes the DDT and everything breaks down. The ax kick finishes Dreamer in a hurry.

Post match we get a big Spinarooni. That face turns needs to happen....oh I don't know, NOW perhaps?

After a break, Booker runs into Goldust (now in an afro as the Undercover Brother), who wants Booker to drop the team because, I kid you now, Shawn might be a racist.

Molly Holly doesn't like Terri because she's not a credible journalist due to some of her swimsuit photos and the Raw Sex column. Cue Trish Stratus, who says people don't like Molly because she's, shall we say, hippy. "You could show like a whole drive-in movie on that thing." Sweet goodness this is disturbing anymore. A match is agreed to and if Molly wins, she gets a title shot. If Trish wins, Molly has to wrestle in a thong. Naturally Trish reveals her own to make sure the fans ignore how evil she was here.

Chris Benoit and Eddie Guerrero try to talk Flair out of this and get nowhere.

European Title: William Regal vs. Bradshaw

Bradshaw is challenging and his Hardcore Title isn't on the line. Regal trips him to the mat to start but gets headlocked for his efforts. A good left hand puts Bradshaw down and it's time to slug away in the corner.

The Regal Cutter gets two (for Regal if that's not clear) but Bradshaw sends him flying with the fall away slam. With the champ in trouble, Nowitzki jumps the barricade and throws Regal the brass knuckles for the knockout shot to retain.

Rating: D. Well that happened. They need to just retire the title already because there hasn't been a real feud over the thing in months and I don't remember the last time a title match broke five minutes. Nowitzki joining Regal could be interesting but let them do anything other than be around such a worthless title.

GET THE F OUT!

Molly Holly vs. Trish Stratus

Non-title. Lawler makes jokes about Molly's figure and it's already uncomfortable. Trish's face is sent into the mat and there's the handspring elbow in the corner for two. Stratusfaction is broken up with a belly to back suplex and the Molly Go Round finishes Trish clean. So to recap: the champ just lost clean (second time a champion has lost in a row) and apparently Molly is rather large in various areas. You know, because Trish is such a stick figure.

Arn Anderson (thankfully in a clean shirt) tries to talk Vince out of this.

King of the Ring Qualifying Match: Eddie Guerrero vs. Rob Van Dam

Non-title of course. They trade armdrags to start until Eddie grabs a leglock on the mat. Back up and Eddie sends Van Dam into the corner as an ECW chant starts up. Van Dam goes sailing over the top rope for a big crash but he's right back up to kick Eddie down. They're certainly keeping things moving so far.

Back in and Eddie grabs a cross armbreaker of all things (JR gets it wrong by calling it a Fujiwara armbar) to keep Van Dam in trouble. A superplex plants Van Dam again but Eddie can't follow up. Instead it's Van Dam missing the split legged moonsault to keep both guys down again. They start trading rollups and Van Dam actually gets the pin, though it

looked like Eddie was supposed to kick out. It didn't look horribly botched but it didn't seem to be the planned finish.

Rating: B-. These two work very well together and I'm glad the champ won but they need to stop going back to this match over and over. Booker would be a good challenger for Van Dam and Eddie can go do something else, though I'm not entirely sure what at this point given the lack of top stories.

The replay shows that Eddie's shoulder was up at two but Van Dam went to a jackknife cover while the referee called for the bell. Definitely not how it was supposed to go.

Undertaker arrives.

Nash won't let Coach talk to Shawn.

Here's Undertaker for a talk. He's tired of people just not getting the fact that he's the Undisputed WWE Heavyweight Champion of the World. All he knows is that he deserves respect, which brings him to HHH. If HHH was so smart, why didn't he know Undertaker was waiting for him last week? The only hope that HHH has at King of the Ring is the hope that Undertaker doesn't kick his face in.

Moving on, Jeff Hardy dropkicked him into human vomit. JR: "Not any kind of vomit. HUMAN VOMIT!" Cue Matt Hardy with a ladder for a distraction so Jeff can get in a few shots. The beatdown is on but the brothers manage to drop him with the ladder before bailing. So they go from a big time tag team to getting squashed by Brock Lesnar to feuding with the World Champion in a side story while we wait on Undertaker vs. HHH?

Regal and Nowitzki leave together because they're both smart but Jeff runs in to say something remains unfulfilled before jumping into a jeep and driving off.

King of the Ring Qualifying Match: Brock Lesnar vs. Bubba Ray Dudley

Brock doesn't waste time by sending Bubba hard into the corner. That earns Brock a neckbreaker and it's already table time, only to have Heyman deck Bubba from behind. Heyman: "OH CENSORED!" The distraction

lets Brock grab a belly to belly on the floor, followed by a modified t-bone suplex back inside. The suplex spamming continues as JR calls this breathtaking. Bubba gets in a release German suplex of his own and a regular German suplex gets two. The middle rope backplash actually connects but Heyman's second distraction sets up the F5 for the pin.

Rating: D+. Watchable power match here with Lesnar looking a little better than usual. Granted that might be due to not having Van Dam and Guerrero around him to really show off how much better they are. Bubba is a good first feud for Lesnar but they really need to have good hands in there to walk Brock through these matches.

After a break, Heyman offers Brock to Vince. Once Vince gets total control, he should call Heyman, who has a great idea for King of the Ring.

We see Rock say he'll be back soon.

Here's Shawn Michaels for his first comments since returning. Shawn talks about how in the WWF, they had everything from garbage men to clowns but the only real thing was....him. Then Wrestlemania XIV came along and it was time to go with Attitude and Steve Austin, who stole his spotlight. He's not blaming Steve though (or a back injury, the ratings or reality apparently) because the fans determine where this company goes as an organization.

So why is he here? Certainly not to wrestle, because the fans killed HBK. However, the only man who stood by him no matter what was Kevin Nash. Cue the NWO with Shawn singing Nash's praises before giving the rest of the team some love as well. We get a group hug but Shawn superkicks Booker off the team, which now has as many active wrestlers as injured ones. The beatdown is on and Booker's shirt is ripped off.

Vince McMahon vs. Ric Flair

No holds barred and the winner owns the whole company. No robe for Flair for some reason. They slug it out on the floor to start and go into the crowd with Ric in control. Some chops send Vince inside for the first time so he can slam Flair and grab the ring bell. The bell off the head

busts Flair open and Vince kicks him in the cut. More shots to the head set up a low blow, only to have Ric kick the chair into Vince's face. A few kicks to the leg set up the Figure Four but here's Brock for the F5 to lay Flair out, giving Vince the easy pin and the company back.

Rating: D-. What else were you expecting here? They told you what you were getting before the back and it's not like you're going to get a face boss around here for more than about five minutes anyway. The match was the mess this was always destined to be as Vince can only do so much and Flair is limited with how hard he can go on him before it gets ridiculous.

Overall Rating: D. This was all over the place, though you have to give them a little bit of a break due to all the changes necessitated by Austin leaving. Vince getting power back is fine, assuming you ignore the fact that the brands should be reunited now as there's no reason for them splitting. Complete lack of logic behind the top story aside, at least we had Booker T. thrown out of the NWO (which he never should have been involved with in the first place) and a good Van Dam vs. Guerrero match. There's still more bad than good but a few things are starting to look up.

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