

Monday Night Raw – May 27, 1996: Between the Dogs

Monday Night Raw

Date: May 27, 1996

Location: Cumberland County Memorial Auditorium, Fayetteville, North Carolina

Attendance: 5,000

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Jerry Lawler

We're past In Your House VIII and...we saw about half the show. In a pretty famous moment, the arena's power was knocked out by an electrical storm and aside from the first and last matches, the arena was dark for most of the night. Therefore this is actually a go home show with Tuesday offering a live Beware of Dog II. Let's get to it.

Oh and over on Nitro, Scott Hall jumped the barricade.

King of the Ring Qualifying Match: Goldust vs. Ultimate Warrior

Rematch from their disaster of a "match" at In Your House VII and Goldust's Intercontinental Title isn't on the line. Warrior has to chase him on the floor to start and it's time for the 80s offense to begin. Goldust's right hands and forearms have no effect as Warrior easily throws him down.

A trip to the floor sees both guys being sent into various metal objects as Vince talks about Warrior's completely insane (like, insane even by Warrior's standards) comic book. An electric chair drop sends Goldust bailing but Ahmed Johnson drags him back to the ring as we head to a break.

Back with Warrior being thrown through Goldust's wooden chair, drawing in some canned Warrior chants. Warrior's banged up shoulder doesn't prevent him from hitting a powerslam (suplex according to that nitwit Vince) but we hit the chinlock anyway. The comeback sends Goldust out to the floor with Warrior following him out for a horrible double countout.

Rating: D-. Was there something in the water in 1996? Who decided to book all these horrible non-finishes after such stupidly long matches? Warrior was just so out of place in 1996 and it showed more

and more every time he got in the ring. The business had just passed him by at this point and there was no way around it. That and Goldust hadn't sped his offense up yet to make him watchable. Just awful here, but that had to be expected.

Lawler threatens Warrior with the broken chair, setting off their infamous feud where Lawler claimed people didn't care because Warrior wore a hat during a promo. Seriously, it's on the Self-Destruction of the Ultimate Warrior DVD. Is there any wonder why Warrior sued over that hatchet job?

We go over Beware of Dog and the issues setting up the second show. This is a rare instance where things were out of the company's hands and they did the only possible option.

Ted DiBiase thinks Savio Vega cheated in the dark last night so he's willing to put up his WWF career in the rematch. The ending to that was flat out smart.

Smoking Gunns vs. BodyDonnas

The Gunns' Tag Team Titles aren't on the line (that would make too much sense) and they have Sunny with them after she tricked Phineas into making her their manager, which set up her turning on them less than a week later to get the belts on the Gunns. That makes this the BodyDonnas faces somehow and Hillbilly Jim is on commentary. Bart works on Zip's arm to start and gorilla presses him down as we take an early break.

Back with various shots of cowgirl Sunny (that works) and Bart getting double teamed on the floor. Skip's legdrop gets two and Zip's gutwrench powerbomb is good for the same. We hit the chinlock for a long bit until Phineas Godwin comes out to plead his case with Sunny. Jim and the Godwins leave as Bart takes a double slingshot suplex. The illegal Skip goes up but Bart rolls through the high crossbody for the fast pin.

Rating: D+. WAY better match here as it actually felt entertaining at times. The Tag Team Title division needed a few adjustments but the Sunny story was better than having nothing at all. Once they got the face/heel alignment straightened out (that took some time) and got rid of Hillbilly Jim, everything wound up being...well it wound up being pretty dull but it was better than anything else we had seen for awhile.

We recap last night's main event which ended in a double pin. I know Shawn gets a lot of flack for not drawing during this time but his first long feud was with British Bulldog. That's no on Shawn.

King of the Ring Qualifying Match: Ahmed Johnson vs. Vader

Owen Hart is on commentary. They slowly shove each other to start and Ahmed isn't intimidated in the slightest. Vader actually gets pummeled down in the corner and the place goes NUTS, giving one of the true genuinely strong reactions outside of Undertaker/Shawn you'll ever see in this era.

Vader gets in a few shots but Ahmed shrugs it off and crossbodies Vader to the floor, taking the mask off in the process. Back from a break with Vader kneeing him in the ribs and hitting the middle rope clothesline for two. Ahmed comes back with his own hard clothesline but Vader drops him all over again. They're beating the heck out of each other here and it's pretty close to awesome.

We hit the chinlock as Owen claims that Ahmed cheated in the Kuwaiti Cup. He doesn't give any reason why but insists that it happened. Simple yet effective heel stuff there, which is what often works best. Vader tries the moonsault and fails as usual, allowing Ahmed to get in a powerslam. Jim Cornette gets dragged in (Owen: "GET YOUR HANDS OFF OF MY MANAGER!") and Ahmed spinebusters Vader, only to have Owen sneak in with a cast shot to the head to give Vader the pin. That's Ahmed's first loss.

Rating: C+. This is a good example of a match that might not be the highest quality but it was a lot of fun, which is exactly what a show like this needed. Vader was selling the heck out of Ahmed's offense and the fans ate it up because Ahmed wasn't like everyone else at this point. Vader could sell like few others and it's no surprise that both of these guys would be in the main event scene soon.

Ahmed is taken out on a stretch and Goldust gives him mouth to mouth, leaving gold paint on his lips. Johnson loses it and chokes Bob Holly to find out where Goldust is. Ahmed runs through a guy in pink (who I thought was Bret Hart at the time) to get into Goldust's locker room. That goes nowhere so Ahmed punches out the cameraman to end the show.

Overall Rating: C. Once we got past the endless opener, this turned into a much, much more entertaining show due to an actual story and

a really fun main event. Johnson seemed destined to be a star and if he could speak anything close to English he would have been World Champion easily. Anyway, far better show than the last few weeks but that's not saying much.

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