

Monday Night Raw – October 28, 2002: The Default Upgrade

Monday Night Raw

Date: October 28, 2002

Location: Joe Louis Arena, Detroit, Michigan

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

This show comes in with a very simple advantage: it's not the Katie Vick episode. There have been well over 1000 episodes of Monday Night Raw (we'll hit #500 by the end of 2002) and last week's might have been absolute rock bottom. There have been horrible shows before, but even the 1993/1994 episodes mainly focused on wrestling. Last week focused on sexual intercourse with a mannequin in a casket. Something tells me this one will be an improvement. Let's get to it.

There's a casket at ringside. I.....they wouldn't. Someone tell me they wouldn't do this again.

Opening sequence.

Here's HHH to get things going (I guess having escaped from the car without a scratch) and I already have a bad feeling about this. HHH sets up a chair in the ring and gives Kane some advice: make sure that there isn't a child safety latch in the back of the trunk. Makes sense actually. Anyway, as for the tape from last week, some people were offended by it and said they would never watch Raw again. HHH agrees, because the things that Kane did to the body were disgusting but the only opinion that matters is from Katie Vick.

He heads outside and opens the casket to reveal the mannequin, who looks "dead tired". HHH takes her inside and, I kid you not, it's time for ventriloquism. Katie found last week's tape painful because Kane's, ahem, equipment was burned and small. It's just like his attempts at winning the World Title: it comes up a bit short. Katie almost fall off his lap and Lawler calls her "dead sexy". HHH doesn't care if anyone was offended last week because he's doing what he wants. Cue Hurricane (described as Kane's former tag team

partner) to ask why HHH is all giggles about escaping.

“Whatsupwiththat?” See, he has his own footage.

Last week, HHH was in a hospital (it’s a man on a table with a paper HHH mask on) and various objects are pulled out of a certain orifice, including a sledgehammer, a magic handkerchief (like a clown would pull from his pocket), a hand, a squirrel, a gear shift, a steering wheel (JR: “Is this a hospital or Brisco Brothers?”) and HHH’s own head. This is accompanied by the doctors sounding like they’re chiseling and hammering, along with one of them calling for more KY jelly. Also of note, the HHH mask changes expressions as each object is pulled out.

Back in the arena, HHH beats up the mannequin (whose wig comes off, revealing that it’s a man) until Kane comes out for the fight. This brings out Bischoff with referees and wrestlers to break it up. Eric makes a casket match for later tonight to FINALLY end this way too long segment.

While last week’s segment was further down the horrible scale, this was way up there on the dumb comedy scale. This felt like Vince hearing the reaction to last week and saying “I’LL SHOW YOU OFFENSIVE!” Kane has already lost the big title match and I have no desire to see him challenge again. Just get us to HHH vs. Shawn which at least had an amazing first match to build from. I can’t wait for this stupid story to wrap up already because it might be the low point in Raw’s history.

A hidden camera shows Trish Stratus on the phone with her mom as she changes her clothes.

William Regal/Lance Storm vs. Rob Van Dam/Tommy Dreamer

Before the match, Regal rips on America for being scared to walk their own streets but they’ll send their kids out trick or treating. Storm and Van Dam start while Dreamer is wearing a hat on the apron. Van Dam gets in a spinning kick for two so it’s off to Regal, who is pulled over the top after the tag.

Regal’s half nelson suplex gets two and we get one heck of an RVD chant as Storm works on an armbar. Another kick allows the hot tag off to Dreamer for some right hands as the hat falls off. Everything breaks down with Rob diving onto the barricade instead of a moving Storm. The distraction lets Storm hit Dreamer with a flagpole for the pin.

Rating: C-. For a match this short, I've seen far worse. This worked well enough with two different styles and the pure wrestlers going with the weapons to win because they cheated. Not bad here, though that RVD chant gives you even more proof about how horrible an idea it was to have HHH go over him so hard.

Eric Bischoff yells at 3 Minute Warning and Rico, basically telling them to make an impact or get out.

Stacy Keibler, in a very nice outfit, comes up to Test because she's now in charge of ideas for his career. Her first idea: call his fans the Testicles! Vince wrote that line didn't he? Testicle jokes abound.

Tag Team Titles: Christian/Chris Jericho vs. Dudley Boyz

Jericho and Christian are defending but here are Rico and 3 Minute Warning to jump Bubba and Spike. No match.

Batista is still coming.

Goldust vs. Test

Test gives the Testicles a greeting and gets punched in the face for his efforts. We'll leave the Golden Globes lines to Goldust if Test doesn't mind. Some elbows in the corner have Goldust in trouble and we hear about Scott Steiner being signed over the weekend. The middle rope bulldog gets two but here's Stacy to break up Shattered Dreams. That means the kiss from Goldust, who puts her in the other corner for Shattered Dreams. The referee protects Stacy of course but she gets in a low blow to set up Test's big boot for the pin.

Bubba yells at Bischoff, who says he can have any partner tonight for a shot at the titles. Eric also denies sending 3 Minute Warning out there.

Scott Steiner video.

We look back at Shawn Michaels' promo from last week where he said he's coming for HHH...but we get an RNN BREAKING NEWS UPDATE! That would mean Randy Orton, who was gone last week because he's working so hard to rehab his shoulder. With the fans' support, he'll be back in no time. JR: "Well isn't that special?"

Kane doesn't care that his casket match is non-title. What happened to Katie Vick was an accident but tonight will be intentional.

Tag Team Titles: Christian/Chris Jericho vs. Bubba Ray Dudley/Jeff

Hardy

Bubba and Jeff are defending. I've heard worse ideas as it's not like they have anything else going on at the moment. Granted it's also another sign that WWE has no idea how to rebuild a tag division after its three major teams all split. Jeff starts fast by dropping the legs between Christian's legs before it's off to Bubba for the right hands. Naturally the fans already want tables, which JR says would be a DQ because JR has common sense.

Jericho comes in and sends Bubba throat first into the ropes for the running crotch attack. That goes nowhere either though and it's back to Jeff but the referee gets bumped. Jeff gets sent to the floor so it's Conchairto time, only to have Bubba duck just in time. Both champs are sent outside via a catapult and Jeff hits one heck of a dive over the top. Cue 3 Minute Warning but Bubba DIVES OFF THE TOP to take down the two of them plus Jericho.

We actually take a break and come back with Jeff in trouble (probably the best move) after a toss over the floor banged up his leg. Christian grabs a front facelock which naturally gives us the unseen tag to Bubba. Jeff fights up but gets caught in the sleeper drop as the champs keep control.

Back up and Jeff completely misses a spinning crossbody (hopefully the director gets a fruit basket for changing the angle fast enough to hide it as well as possible) and the hot tag brings in Bubba. House is cleaned and Jeff blind tags himself in for What's Up (with a legdrop) on Christian. Since he can't help himself, Bubba goes for a table but Christian dropkicks it back into his face.

The Whisper in the Wind gets two on Jericho and Bubba spears a belt out of Christian's hands. With the champs in trouble, here are Rico and 3 Minute Warning holding an unconscious Spike upside down. Bubba gives chase but Jeff hits the Swanton on Jericho for two anyway. Christian makes the save and the distraction lets Jericho get in a belt shot, followed by the Lionsault for the pin to retain.

Rating: B. Well that was surprising, though I'm not sure why given who was in there. Above all else they gave this some time instead of cramming everything into five minutes. I know it takes away from time for Testicle jokes but more often than not, having a good match is going to cure a lot of your problems.

HHH accuses Kane of wanting to have sex with him because they'll be

around a casket. He's not worried about Shawn either but gets a phone call and cuts the interview short. HHH goes into his dressing room and F-VIEW (the new name for the hidden camera earlier) shows him talking to Flair, who isn't here tonight. He's a lot more nervous than he seems. I have no idea why this needed to exist.

Al Snow yells at Christopher Nowinski for being a jerk and not appreciating his efforts. Nowinski says he'll beat ANYONE tonight but wants Snow ringside.

Here's Bischoff for a chat. In addition to Scott Steiner coming to Raw, he's received a host of talent in exchange for Big Show. Not that he mentions any of them but I'm sure it doesn't really matter. Anyway, Raw is awesome because of things like the hidden cameras, which Bischoff put in place. I'd assume Trish will be suing him by Wednesday.

As for Survivor Series, the Elimination Chamber is coming and he'll have details on it next week. Tonight all he'll tell us is that it's going to have six superstars and be part Survivor Series, part Royal Rumble and part WarGames. The title will be on the line with HHH defending against Chris Jericho, Booker T., Rob Van Dam, Kane and Shawn Michaels. Those sound like details to me Eric. As for Shawn, he has one week to get back to Eric...and here's Booker T. to interrupt. He doesn't really have anything to say but he seems happy to be in the title match.

Christopher Nowinski vs. Booker T.

Snow is at ringside. Booker hammers him down to start until a hot shot gives Nowinski a breather. A powerslam gets two on Booker and we're off to a chinlock (With Nowinski's back to the camera. Contrary to what WWE wants you to believe, it really doesn't make much of a difference.). Booker makes a quick escape and gets in a spinning kick to the face. That sends Chris outside...where he hits Snow to start a brawl, meaning he beats Booker by DQ.

Rating: D-. So let's recap: Booker T. is put into a World Title match in the main event of a pay per view in the previous segment and LOSES TO FREAKING CHRIS NOWINSKI in the next match in a spot that literally could have been anyone in the company? I know 2002 is considered a dark time for WWE but this is pure stupidity.

Booker beats both guys up post match.

Women's Title: Trish Stratus vs. Jacqueline vs. Molly Holly

Trish is defending and it's one fall to a finish. During the entrances, Lawler gets in this gem: "I had a nightmare about Trish last night. I dreamed that I was six months old and she was my mother but I was a bottle baby!" Molly gets knocked outside to start so Jackie tries some rollups before grabbing a half crab. Now it's Molly coming back in to grab the other leg but the challengers let go to fight each other. Jackie blocks the Stratusphere and gets two off a DDT. Not that it matters as a double Stratusfaction is enough to put Molly away and retain the title. This was nothing.

HHH vs. Kane

Non-title and a casket match. Kane slugs him down in the corner to start but it's way too early for the casket. Back up and HHH is tossed over the top for a big crash out to the floor as JR talks about cremation. A bell to the head drops Kane and, since hitting him with it again isn't an option for some reason, HHH opts for punches. The spinebuster and facebuster set up a DDT as Lawler wonders if HHH is right about what Kane REALLY wants. JR: "Is there anything wrong with that?" Kane fights his way out of the casket but gets crotched on top. That means a superplex but Kane still won't stay in.

Neither finisher can hit so HHH puts on the sleeper, even though it hasn't won anything in about a month now. Nearly ten minutes into the match, Lawler FINALLY points out that these two will be in the Chamber. Granted that only means they'll be losing to Nowinski. There's the top rope clothesline but HHH kicks him low to break the chokeslam. HHH chairs him down a few times but here's Shawn out of the casket to clean house. Sweet Chin Music is enough to let Kane get in a chokeslam and throw HHH in the casket for the win.

Rating: D. See? HHH will TOTALLY do a job as long as he doesn't have to get pinned and it only takes two former World Champions (one of which is contractually obligated to be Shawn) to get it done! The match was as dull as you would expect, though the action wasn't bad. Kane has just lost so much heat and there's no way to repair that in a match like this, especially with that ending.

Kane disappears so Shawn can dance on the casket to end the show.

Overall Rating: D. That tag match helped a lot but the rest of the show ranged anywhere from stupid ideas (Booker losing five minutes

after being announced as a World Title contender) to wastes of time (the triple threat). The show is just lacking any energy or anything worth watching as Shawn is the only thing close to interesting and he's locked in with HHH, who is going to suck the life out of anything. Bad show here and that's likely to be the case as long as HHH is on top.

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