

Monday Night Raw – November 4, 2002: At Least It's Wrestling

Monday Night Raw

Date: November 4, 2002

Location: FleetCenter, Boston, Massachusetts

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

Please let it be better than October. I mean, I'm not sure it could possibly be much worse and the Elimination Chamber could certainly help things out a bit. If it gets Kane on to ANYTHING else, it's a step in the right direction. Raw has been horrible lately and it all starts with the main event so hopefully that gets better. Let's get to it.

Eric Bischoff is in his office and a hidden camera (which he said he was responsible for) shows him watching a tape of kissing Stephanie on Smackdown. He's a good bit distraught, because of course he is.

Opening sequence.

Shawn Michaels arrives and is given a new shirt.

3 Minute Warning vs. Bubba Ray Dudley/Jeff Hardy

Fallout from last week when Jamal and Rosey cost Bubba and Jeff the Tag Team Titles. It's a brawl to start of course with Jeff being thrown into the air but turning into a dropkick to put Jamal down. A great looking Poetry in Motion over the top takes out Rico and the Samoans as we settle down with Bubba actually hitting the middle rope backplash on Jamal. Of course the fans already want tables but have to settle for Jamal throwing Bubba down to take over.

Rosey comes in for a belly to belly but the Samoans bang heads (I'm not sure if that should hurt), allowing Bubba to get in a double clothesline. That's enough for the hot tag to Jeff for the house cleaning. The Whisper in the Wind gets two on Jamal and Rico tries to interfere, only to have Spike make the save. Spike and his bad ribs are dropped onto the barricade but Rosey takes What's Up. Jamal comes back in and takes Poetry in Motion, only to have Rosey break up the Swanton. The Samoan drop puts Jeff away.

Rating: D. 3 Minute Warning is one of those teams who are great for run-ins but then they actually have to wrestle, which defeats the entire purpose. They're just not that good in the ring and it's not like they have a lot of teams to fight in the first place. Bubba and Jeff aren't exactly interesting either and, again, D-Von is doing NOTHING on Smackdown right now.

Victoria is glad Ivory is on Raw and can't wait to see Ivory destroy Trish tonight. Ivory thinks Victoria is a bit nuts.

Women's Title: Trish Stratus vs. Ivory

Ivory is challenging and pops the champ in the jaw at the bell. The aggression continues as Victoria comes out to do commentary. Trish gets a kick to the head for two but gets taken down by....I guess we'll call it a spinebuster. Victoria hasn't said a word and Ivory gets two off a gutwrench suplex. Back up and the Stratusphere gives the champ two as the announcers still can't get anything out of Victoria. A middle rope shove to the back of the neck (called a bulldog and Trish landed a good second before Ivory) retains the title.

Rating: D-. As much as I enjoy Trish in something close to Kentucky blue, this was as sloppy of a women's match as you'll see not featuring Jackie Gayda. Ivory is one of the better workers of the previous era but the chemistry was WAY off here, making for a really bad outing here.

Victoria and Trish get in a fight on the stage.

F-View shows us Victoria beating up Terri with clothing being torn. I kind of like these better than just having....RNN BREAKING NEWS!

Orton's shoulder is up to 32% mobility, up from last week's 30%. Thank you for all the support.

....random camera crews all over the building.

Bischoff yells at the production guy who put a hidden camera in his office. My goodness they actually covered a plot hole. HHH and Ric Flair come in and want to know what Bischoff is going to do about Shawn. Before that can be explained, HHH wants to know why Bischoff has been treating him so badly since the rosters have been frozen (save for trades and Batista popping up of course). Apologetic sucking up ensues so Flair shows Eric the kiss tape again. HHH: "So I put on a mask to screw with Kane and you put on a mask to make out

with my ex-wife?" Thankfully we cut away before that can go any further.

William Regal/Lance Storm vs. Tommy Dreamer/Al Snow

Storm's pre-match speech is cut off by a Scott Steiner video. Dreamer still has his hat. JR brings up Snow vs. Dreamer in a Singapore cane match a few weeks ago and doesn't know why they're teaming together now. My guess is bad booking. Storm and Snow start things off with Al being sent into the corner where his leg is slammed into the apron. The USA chants start up as Regal keeps Snow in trouble with a leglock. Storm does the same as this is already dragging. Snow gets up and makes the hot tag so Dreamer can give Lance a Death Valley Driver. Not that it matters as Regal kicks him in the head so Storm can get the pin.

Rating: D. This wasn't so much bad as much as it was incredibly boring. The tag division is such a worthless piece of junk right now as Regal and Storm, one of the better in-ring teams, are some of the least interesting people around. Dreamer and Storm are there for a nostalgia pop and there isn't much of a future in that.

Shawn, in his new shirt, drinks coffee and looks for HHH.

Stacy Keibler tells Test about the success of the Testicles marketing plan but now he needs a haircut.

Dave Batista vs. Justin Credible

Two tosses, a Regal roll, a clothesline that obviously misses and the sitout powerbomb to the only reaction of the match for the pin on Justin.

HHH is tired of waiting on Shawn and goes to the ring to call him out.

Here's HHH to call Shawn out because it's the top of the second hour and we need star power. There's no Shawn so HHH tells him to not accept the invitation to the Elimination Chamber. So it's an offer and not a demand? Is there a waiting list? HHH goes on a rant about how there's nothing anyone can do about him being champion. JR: "Well they could beat him." Booker T. comes out instead of Shawn to say right now, HHH has bigger problems than Shawn.

HHH doesn't care about the five WCW Titles because Booker can't even hold his jock. Booker promises to take the title at Survivor Series and cuts the champ off to say HHH doesn't run him. We even get a

Don't Hate the Player line, which actually makes sense here. Now it's Chris Jericho to interrupt because he's sick of hearing Booker say sucker. Chris Jericho IS NOT A SUCKER! Jericho rips on the Spinarooni which has nothing on the Chris Jericho Juke N Jive. Double teaming ensues but Kane comes out for the save, setting up tonight's already announced main event.

Stacy sees Test's haircut and swears it's going to make the Testicles grow.

Test vs. Hurricane

It's Test, but with short hair! He elbows Hurricane in the jaw and stomps away in the corner as Lawler tries to figure out the plural of Testicles. A powerbomb is countered into a hurricanrana and Hurricane starts kicking at the leg. The Shining Wizard gets two on Test but the Blockbuster misses. Test can't hit a big boot (not good when it's his one move) so he settles for something like Cross Rhodes for the pin.

Rating: D. I know the idea here is to get Stacy out there in really small outfits and while that's working fine, I don't know if anyone was thinking another Test push was going to work. Then again their big idea is saying Testicles over and over again so I don't think there's a lot of thought going into this one.

Post match Test doesn't want to do something so Stacy kisses him. Test: "I LOVE MY TESTICLES!"

Video on the Elimination Chamber, which is basically just blueprints of the design without telling us much else.

Chris Jericho video, set to Saliva's King of My World.

Jericho loved the video and can't wait for the Elimination Chamber. Christian says don't worry about it because he'll beat up Rob Van Dam so badly that Bischoff will have to put him in Van Dam's spot. This turns into an argument over who is going to be champion.

F-View shows HHH telling Jericho to watch out for Shawn in the tag match. Not that it matters of course because Flair will be at ringside. The villains leave and Shawn is shown watching/listening in.

Christian vs. Rob Van Dam

Van Dam acknowledges the RVD chants and we're ready to go. Feeling

out process to start until Van Dam gets a spinning kick to the face to drop Christian. The moonsault from the apron misses, as does the spinning kick from the apron. Christian sends him hard into the steps and it's time to mock the finger pointing, which is totally and completely original.

Back in and we hit the chinlock for a bit as the announcers talk about Shawn. Van Dam fights up and hits his step over kick, followed by another spinning kick. A monkey flip into an awkward looking splash gives Rob two and a high crossbody gets the same. Rolling Thunder hits feet though (with Christian having to stretch his legs out for Rob to hit those) and Christian grabs a chair. Unfortunately so does the referee, allowing Rob to sweep the leg. The middle rope kick to the chest sets up the Five Star for the pin.

Rating: D+. This was a lot worse than you would expect as Rob seemed way off for some reason. Christian wasn't quite used to singles wrestling here and wasn't the best choice to carry Van Dam when he was this off. Then again it doesn't really matter as Rob is clearly just a name on a list for the Chamber as he's lost every bit of his momentum after Unforgiven.

Here's Christopher Nowinski to talk about how awesome Harvard really is. He loves Boston but the town has gone downhill since he left. Chris goes after the local teams by saying Ted Williams, Larry Bird and Nomar "Garcia-whatever" are not great men. Cue Al Snow for a distraction so Maven can make his return and beat Chris down. I can't wait for Tough Enough III to get going so these guys can stop getting so much TV time. I know it has to be done but that doesn't mean this is interesting stuff. Actually, given some of the other options, this might be the best choice. Or maybe some 1993 WCW.

Goldust congratulates Kane on having Booker T., a fabulous man, as his tag team partner tonight. He even throws in a bit of advice: Kane should try some breathing exercises. This earns him a choke up against a wall until Booker comes in to save his buddy. Booker says HHH is messing with Kane by making up stories about having sex with a dead body. Booker: "WHO WOULD HAVE SEX WITH A DEAD BODY?" Goldust: "I was young and stupid!" Booker asks if Kane can dig it. He certainly can....."SUCKA!"

Shawn is still here. Well when did anyone suggest he'd left?

HHH/Chris Jericho vs. Kane/Booker T.

Booker and Jericho get things going with Booker chopping away up against the ropes. A knee to the ribs cuts Booker off though and the World Champion graces us with his presence. Booker knocks him down and it's off to Kane, sending HHH crawling back to Jericho. I get the idea here and I appreciate the effort but Kane has already lost every bit of his credibility and it really doesn't work here.

Jericho gets in his middle rope dropkick for two and HHH makes it even worse with a chop block. The referee tries to keep Booker out and Jericho chairs Kane in the leg to give the villains a real target. Unfortunately that means a leglock because Flair hasn't had the chance to teach HHH leg work yet.

Just to further hammer home the fact that HHH isn't as good at this as he thinks he is, Jericho comes in and goes through Flair's checklist of knee attacks and the match suddenly picks up. HHH puts on a Figure Four (right next to the ropes) but gets caught holding Jericho's hand for the break. The knee doesn't seem too bad though as Kane suplexes both villains down and makes the ice cold tag to Booker.

Everything breaks down with Booker firing off a variety of kicks, including one to knock Flair off the apron. The ax kick gets two on HHH with Jericho making the save. Kane makes a similar save as a top rope clothesline breaks up the Walls. Booker misses the missile dropkick but here's Shawn with Sweet Chin Music on HHH to give Booker the cheap pin.

Rating: D+. The leg work didn't go anywhere but at least they were trying something. Shawn interfering was the only possible ending and at least HHH gave up the pin to end the match. It's certainly not a good match but they did something to help set up the title match, even though Booker has almost no chance to win the thing.

Shawn agrees to enter the Chamber to end the show.

Overall Rating: D. And somehow, that's their best show in weeks. Above all else, we seem to have moved on from Katie Vick, which is an instant improvement. The main thing here is the focus shifting back to wrestling, which is the best thing that could have ever happened. This shock value stuff is crippling and while the HHH and Shawn Show isn't must see TV, at least it's watchable TV that won't embarrass fans.

That being said, sweet goodness this show is still a wreck. The tag

division has flown off a cliff, the women are doing what they can in the three minutes a week they're allowed and the Tough Enough jazz isn't making me want to watch the reality show (though I did back in the day). I was really not impressed here but it's somehow going in a better direction. However, that direction is going to be gone when they can't put six people in one match for the title and we need something else for the rest of them to fight about. It's almost like that lone singles male champion thing might not be the best idea.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up the NXT: The Full Sail Years Volumes I and II, now in PAPERBACK. Check out the information here:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2017/03/24/kbs-history-of-nxt-volumes-1-and-2-now-available-in-paperback/>

And check out my Amazon author page with cheap wrestling books at:

<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>