

Smackdown – June 29, 2007: The Other Benoit Show

Smackdown

Date: June 29, 2007

Location: AT&T Center, San Antonio, Texas

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield

This is an interesting show as it's just after Chris Benoit's death but now the real story has come out and WWE looks kind of bad after Monday's tribute show. I mean, of course they should have immediately assumed a man snapped and murdered his family because that's the natural line of thought. It's back to storylines tonight so let's get to it.

We open with Vince McMahon talking about how they've found out what happened with Benoit and how there will be no mention of his name save for these comments. Instead, tonight is dedicated to the memories of everyone affected by this incident. And that's the last you'll hear of Benoit on WWE TV. It's also edited off the Network but that has to be expected.

Opening sequence.

Ric Flair vs. Carlito

This is a mostly if not all interpromotional show as they were planning another Benoit tribute and then everything changed. Flair used to mentor Carlito but Carlito felt he was entitled to whatever he wanted. Chops and right hands have Carlito in trouble but he gets in an awkward looking dropkick in the corner. A better dropkick gets two and they head to the corner for more kicks and chops.

Carlito starts in on Flair's damaged ribs and JBL actually talks about what it means to not be able to breathe in the ring. Six left hands in the corner (not ten for no apparent reason) give Carlito two and it's off to a bodyscissors as the crowd is trying to stay in this one. Ric comes back with chops and JBL is already bowing down

as much as he can. The Figure Four makes Carlito tap without too much effort.

Rating: C-. Just a match here with Carlito working on the injured body part to keep Flair in trouble but losing to the better man at the end. I never got the appeal of Carlito and Flair didn't do much for me around this time but at least the was entertaining enough while it lasted. Above all else though it made sense and that's arguably more important.

Lance Cade vs. Matt Hardy

Their teams are feuding over Cade's (and Trevor Murdoch's) Tag Team Titles. Feeling out process to start with Cade getting in an early dropkick before starting in on the arm. The announcers talk about how Cade is similar to JBL and how Matt has matured in the last year (pick which one you want to make fun of more) as Matt gets in a few shots to take over. A sitout spinebuster plants Matt though and gives the rather dull Cade two.

We hit an abdominal stretch (Cade: "ASK HIM!" No wonder Jericho mentored him later.) for a bit before Cade just BLASTS HIM with a clothesline. JBL says he won a World Title with a clothesline, which makes me believe that his title reign was so boring that even he doesn't remember how he won the belt. Cade gets two more off a superplex but gets caught in a very quick Twist of Fate to give Matt the pin.

Rating: D+. It felt like they were ready to push Matt if they could find the right spot but it just never came together for a variety of reasons. He was about to start in on the US Title feud with MVP but it took WAY too long to get to the payoff. Hardy gave Cade a lot here though and that should be good for Lance going forward.

We look at Judgment Day 2007 with Edge beating Batista to retain the Smackdown World Title.

Michelle McCool likes frolicking on the beach in a bikini. She got SO much better as part of Laycool.

Cruiserweight Title: Chavo Guerrero vs. Jamie Noble vs. Funaki

Chavo is defending and it's one fall to a finish. Noble and Funaki are just kind of hanging around at this point but Jamie is more serious than usual for an upgrade. Jamie gets sent into the corner to start but pops back up to kick Funaki in the face. The slow pace picks up a bit with Chavo sunset flipping Jamie who sends Funaki flying with a release German suplex. Jamie and Chavo are sent outside for a big dive from Funaki, followed by a bulldog on Jamie for good measure. Not that it matters as Chavo comes back in and grabs the Gory Bomb to retain.

Rating: C-. Not terrible here but the match had no heat and was just kind of there for the sake of getting one of Benoit's friends on the show (nothing wrong with that). Funaki and Jamie were WAY past their peaks as title contenders at this point though to be fair, WWE didn't exactly try to hide it.

Edge storms into Vickie Guerrero's (acting for Teddy Long, who is getting ready to get married) office looking for Teddy. He doesn't want to face Batista tonight but calms down a bit when he finds out it's non-title. Edge will compete under protest tonight. Vickie really hadn't found her stride yet.

Jesse and Festus are happy to be coming to Smackdown.

Deuce N Domino vs. Cryme Tyme

Non-title and interpromotional again. Domino and JTG start things off with the latter scoring off a middle rope leg lariat. Shad slams JTG onto Domino (now with a very bloody nose) for two and it's off to Deuce to take over. A cobra clutch goes nowhere so it's back to Shad for the power displays. Cherry (Deuce's cousin) offers a distraction though and Shad gets rolled up for the pin.

Rating: D. I liked Deuce N Domino but this was a really boring match with nothing interesting going on. There's nothing to see here (save for Cherry) and that's one of the major issues with this show: matches with no stories and no reason for them to be fighting isn't the most intriguing stuff in the world.

Cryme Tyme is way too smiley after losing like that.

Post break Deuce N Domino are in the ring so Cryme Tyme steals their car and promises to take it to a chop shop.

MVP vs. Kane

Non-title (MVP is US Champion) again. Kane easily powers him out of the ring and you can see the fear on MVP's face. Back in and MVP thinks better of it before bailing outside again. MVP goes for the arm and actually has some success before going after the leg.

According to commentary, Kane's entire career is built around the big boot. That's one of those lines that makes so little sense that I don't even want to try to figure it out. Kane makes his comeback with a running clothesline and the side slam, followed by the top rope clothesline. The chokeslam gives Kane the clean pin.

Rating: D. Not only was it boring, but Kane didn't even use a big boot to win! I'VE NEVER SEEN THIS BEFORE! Nothing to see here, but that's not the biggest surprise in the world here given that they only had a few minutes and the champion lost clean. Kane wouldn't win the title so it's not like this meant anything.

Video on Vengeance, which is a completely forgotten show for all the wrong reasons.

Eugene is glad to be on Smackdown but his debut match is against Great Khali.

Victoria and new Smackdown talent Mickie James get in an argument over who is wilder. To prove her wildness, Victoria promises to kiss whomever comes out of a door next. It's Howard Finkel so we'll skip him and move on to....Jim Duggan. Jim leaves before any kissing can ensue so Mickie takes Victoria's place. She ignores Big Dick Johnson until Ron Simmons comes up for the catchphrase. That was one of the dumbest segments I've ever seen, which covers a lot of ground.

Mickie James vs. Victoria

Mickie looks GREAT here. It's a wrestling sequence to start until Mickie gets in a crossbody for the first major offense. Victoria crotches her on top though and ties Mickie up in the Tree of Woe for some hair pulling. The torture rack into the spinning side slam gets

two but Mickie gets a hurricanrana out of the corner. Victoria breaks up the MickieDT but misses a moonsault. A quick rollup gives Mickie the pin in what felt like an audible.

Rating: C+. It's amazing what happens when you have two talented women who are working hard, even in a short match. The Smackdown women were basically left alone and allowed to actually wrestle instead of all the nonsense going on over on Raw. It's not a great match or anything but it was fun while it lasted, even with the odd ending.

Great Khali vs. Eugene

Tree slam for the pin in less than forty five seconds.

Batista says that he'll settle for punishing Edge if he can't have a title shot.

Edge vs. Batista

Non-title. Edge hides in the ropes for the first minute or so until he starts kicking at the knee. Batista switches things up with a single leg takedown of all things before throwing on a Brock Lock. A knee crusher sets up a half crab on the champ as Batista has an interesting definition of punishment. Edge tries a low blow but Batista grabs the hand so we keep going. Batista's running forearm knocks Edge into the barricade and we take a break.

Back with Edge getting in a shot to the back and snapping the neck across the top rope. We hit the cravate as the announcers bicker about Edge never pinning Batista....except for that one time, which makes Cole sound even dumber than usual. Batista comes back with a spear and side slam as we're just waiting on what's likely to be a clean fall over the champ. A spinebuster counters Edge's spear and the Batista Bomb gives Batista (in case that wasn't clear) the pin.

Rating: C+. As soon as this was announced as a non-title match, you pretty much knew the ending from there. Edge is the kind of guy who can bounce back with a promo or doing something sleazy so it's not the biggest problem in the world, though it's still rather annoying. Either that or he'll just get hurt again and vacate the title, which

wound up happening less than a month after this.

Overall Rating: D+. Totally nothing show here but that's the case with something like this. There isn't a really good match on the card and certainly nothing worth going out of your way to see. The real problem here is the lack of storylines (and the two singles champions losing clean) as that's just not enough to carry a show. Skip this one as it's not even worth the (incredibly limited) historical value.

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