

Monday Night Raw – December 20, 1993: New York Isn't Memphis

Monday Night Raw

Date: December 20, 1993

Location: Westchester County Civic Center, White Plains, New York

Attendance: 3,000

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Shawn Michaels

We're getting close to wrapping up the year and that means it's time to get ready for the Royal Rumble. Last week focused on setting up the casket match which will see Undertaker challenge Yokozuna for the WWF Title and we've heard rumblings of Bret Hart vs. his brother Owen. At least one of them is awesome. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Ludvig Borga beating Tatanka back in October, ending his two plus year undefeated streak. Borga then helped put him on the shelf so tonight it's all about revenge. Tatanka: "Tonight, I'm out for revenge!" Well that makes things pretty clear.

Vince and Shawn chat about tonight's show.

Jeff Jarrett vs. PJ Walker

Two future World Champions, which would have made the audience shake their heads in 1993. Now it makes me want to cry as my head shakes but that's just me. Jeff struts away from an Irish whip but gets hiptossed down. That's about it for Walker at the moment though as Jeff gets in a dropkick. The announcers talk about Jack Tunney being up for Secretary of Defense as Jeff misses a kneedrop, only to grab a running DDT for the pin.

Rating: D. Sweet goodness Jarrett was dull. I'm not a fan of country music and now I have to hear about it every single time Jarrett is in the ring. The running DDT was fine for a finisher but DANG the rest of him was someone who was only going to work in Memphis. It's such a simple style of offense and that's not going to make it on the main stage.

Spend your money to tell the WWF that Lex Luger should be in the

Royal Rumble!

Men on a Mission vs. Duane Gill/Barry Hardy

Mo takes Gill (with hair here instead of his better known bald look) down with an armbar and actually manages to avoid any major injuries. It must be a good night. Mabel comes in and drops the big fat elbow as the announcers talk about someone dying from eating pigs. Michael Cole doesn't even sound this awkward. Vince isn't done yet as he suggests that the Royal Rumble could come down to Mo vs. Mabel. Imagine that: Mabel as a main eventer. That'll be the day. More slow paced arm work continues as Shawn sounds a bit "under the weather". A reverse DDT and the middle rope splash end Hardy.

Rating: F. I used to love Men on a Mission but WOW they haven't aged well. Mabel was acceptable enough for the big fat monster but Mo might be the most worthless wrestler I can remember from this era. You could even say that Hardy and Gill were more valuable as they give me flashbacks to Gillberg and Barry gives me images of Broken Barry Horowitz.

The Royal Rumble Report runs down the card and the nine names in the Rumble.

Ludvig Borga is ready to crush Tatanka again.

Tatanka vs. Ludvig Borga

Tatanka chops away and we get a graphic listing the announcers. In case you're flipping through and hoping to avoid Rio Rogers I guess. Borga is in early trouble and gets sent into the post, meaning it's WAR PATH time. A high crossbody gets two but Borga gets in a clothesline for his first offense over two minutes in. The former boxer starts hammering away in the corner and gets two off a bad looking powerslam. Tatanka starts the comeback but here's Yokozuna for the DQ.

Rating: D+. I always liked Borga but time haven't been the nicest to him. He has a good enough look and was a solid character but the in-ring work wasn't exactly strong. On the other hand, Tatanka is a good example of someone who lived WAY beyond his expiration date and turned a one note character into a pretty nice career.

Tatanka gets double teamed but Lex Luger makes the save with a slam on Yokozuna.

The announcers bicker about what we just saw. Shawn doesn't like

Luger using the forearm, which sounds like the start of a feud that never happened.

Lou Albano is presented to the crowd for no apparent reason.

Adam Bomb vs. Mark Thomas

Bomb shoves him around and rips at Thomas' face. Vince: "Thomas is a big Barney fan!" That's the topic of the match with Shawn accusing Barney of charging 427% interest for a personal appearance. As you digest that brilliance, Thomas is powerbombed for the pin.

Thurman Plugg is coming.

We look at Owen Hart challenging his brother last week.

Bret says no way.

Owen Hart vs. Mike Bell

Bell actually wins a fight over the arm to start so Owen hits something like a headscissors driver (he does have a tendency to drive people's heads into the mat) to take over. Shawn accuses Bret of getting more Christmas presents than Owen as Hart drops a middle rope elbow. A belly to belly sets up the Sharpshooter to make Bell tap.

Rating: D+. Bell got in WAY more offense than I was expecting to see here and that makes Hart's win mean just a bit more. The announcers also made sure to point out the fact that Owen got in a lot of original offense instead of just using Bret's stuff. They're trying to show the difference between the two and that's going to set up the feud even better.

We go to Undertaker's shop (complete with a sign, meaning it's an official registered business, which is quite the departure from what you would expect from Undertaker) where he's working on Yokozuna's double sized casket.

Headshrinkers vs. Phil Apollo/Jerry Seavey

Apollo would wind up playing Doink a few years later. Samu hammers away on everyone as we hear about Donald Trump's upcoming wedding. Their conclusion: Trump is no Heart Break Kid. Seavey gets beaten from one side of the ring to the other and a double Stroke sets up a top rope splash for the pin.

Overall Rating: D. Nothing to see here but it's a long way towards the Royal Rumble. The Bret vs. Owen stuff is starting to go

somewhere though and that's one of the best feuds the company has ever put together. Unfortunately the rest of the stuff was as boring as you could imagine with Jarrett being a major low point for the show.

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