

Smackdown – January 2, 2003: I Long For Uncle Elmer

Smackdown

Date: January 2, 2003

Location: Tingley Coliseum, Albuquerque, New Mexico

Commentators: Michael Cole, Tazz

It's time for a new year with a special live show. The big deal tonight is the wedding between Al Wilson and Dawn Marie, which should hopefully be a big step towards finally ending this stupid storyline. The thing won't go away and unfortunately it's going towards another Torrie vs. Dawn match. Let's get to it.

A narrated opening video talks about Brock Lesnar making his return to the ring tonight. Another voice talks about the wedding, which really does seem to be the bigger deal.

Opening sequence, which includes several shots of Stephanie.

Here are John Cena and Bull Buchanan to rap about Rikishi being fat.

John Cena vs. Rikishi

Rikishi punches him down to start as it's very weird to see Cena in wrestling boots with the (khaki) shorts. Cena gets thrown outside for a bit, followed by a legdrop for two back inside. Buchanan offers a cheap shot on the floor and Cena takes over as Cole says we'll start the Royal Rumble participants next week. Those are always fun, even if the show is old. We hit the chinlock for a bit until Rikishi fights up with a Faarooq spinebuster. The referee is with Buchanan though, meaning Rikishi has to beat him up too. Cena shoves the referee away and rolls Rikishi up (with Rikishi's feet in the ropes) for the pin.

Rating: D. The match was nothing to see but the result is the right call. I've complained for months about Rikishi being pushed far too

strong so it's nice to see him finally lose a match to someone, even in a bit of a weak finish. Either way, it's a good thing to see Cena getting a win as the raps are getting more entertaining week after week.

Rikishi beats them up post match.

Here's Dawn Marie, in her wedding dress, with something to say. She's going to be getting married tonight because she's such a beautiful bride. Oh and she'll do it without clothes. No, she won't.

Stephanie is in the back and goes into Dawn's locker room to say she can't be married without any clothes on. So she's stopping a woman from taking off her clothes but is also stopping a heel from doing what she wants. As usual, I have no idea what Stephanie is supposed to be. Repercussions are promised but Dawn hints that she'll do it anyway.

Chuck Palumbo vs. Bill DeMott

DeMott runs him over to start and shrugs off a clothesline. A screaming splash in the corner keeps Palumbo in trouble as Cole talks about Bill wanting to step up in WWE. Chuck's comeback is cut off by a shot to the back of the head. That goes so well that they do the same thing again, followed by DeMott hitting a reverse DDT for the pin. Was there really anything wrong with the powerbomb or moonsault?

Rating: D. So is this DeMott push going anywhere? I mean, I can't imagine that it will but it would be nice to tease that it's going to instead of just doing the squash matches over and over. At least they let him stop beating up cruiserweights and went with someone who wasn't going to be hurt by the loss.

Undertaker is coming back at the Royal Rumble. Every clip of him in this video is the Deadman version.

Billy Kidman (who I had almost forgotten was Cruiserweight Champion) runs into Torrie Wilson for the patented awkward conversation. They talk about the wedding and Kidman acts it out for some reason. So he's making fun of her father and reminding Torrie that her dad is

marrying someone she hates.

Kurt Angle isn't worried about who Chris Benoit picks to face Team Angle tonight because he'll still be champion after the Royal Rumble. This place is about wrestling and the three of them are the best in the world. If Benoit ever did wrestle in college, it was probably at the University of Saskatchewan and he couldn't even make the practice squad.

Eddie Guerrero vs. Billy Kidman

Non-title again and Eddie has gotten one heck of a haircut. Eddie gets monkey flipped to start so he snaps off a fall away slam into a bridge for two. We hit an armbar as Cena and Buchanan come out to say he's about to crack the Guerreros and make huevos rancheros. After a few Taco Bell jokes, Chavo goes after Buchanan in the ring and a fight breaks out.

Rikishi comes in for the save and is taken away as we take a break. Back with Rikishi still being held back, Chavo and Buchanan ejected, Cena on commentary talking about how he's harder than ring tones and Eddie hitting a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker. A Gory Stretch into a spinning powerbomb gets two and it's off to a chinlock. Eddie backdrops him to the floor and Cena threatens to hit Cole in, what sounded like, his foolbox.

Kidman fights out of a sleeper but takes too long going up top and gets superplexed right back down. The Frog Splash misses though and Kidman hits the BK Bomb for two. A high crossbody gives Kidman two but they ram heads in the corner, allowing Cena to hit Eddie in the head with the chain. Kidman didn't see it and hits the Shooting Star for the pin.

Rating: B-. It looks like they're trying to turn Los Guerreros face, which they would be due to how strong they've been recently anyway, but I'm not sure if it's the best move to just change them up this fast. At least Kidman finally won something, even though that Cruiserweight Title means less and less every single week. As usual, Kidman has shown he can hang with heavyweights but is apparently on top of the nothing division an in way over his head anywhere else.

Video on Brock Lesnar.

WAY too long package on the buildup to the wedding. As I've mentioned many times, I still have no idea why this is a bad thing for Al.

It's wedding time. Al comes out looking like he's trying to look classy in Hawaii, Dawn is in her dress and the minister sounds like Slick. We hit the objection line and Dawn does indeed object. She wanted to take everything off but instead strips to her underwear. The thing is no one ever said AL couldn't be married sans clothing so let's take a long time stripping him as well. With a straight on camera shot of Al in briefs, they're married and Al is kissed to the ground. That's it. No angle, no Torrie, no interruption. Just a wedding and that's it. This has been a major waste of your time.

Chris Benoit/??? vs. Team Angle

Benoit can pick any partner he wants and one of the big drawing points of this show has been the return of Brock Lesnar. We also saw a video on Lesnar and Brock has issues with Angle. Therefore, the partner is Edge. Not a bad choice but not exactly where the signs were pointing.

Benoit and Haas get things going with Chris running him over a few times and handing it off to Shelton. That means a quick Crossface before it's off to Edge to stomp away in the corner. Haas offers a distraction from the apron though and Team Angle takes over for the first time....in their careers I guess.

Shelton gets two off a suplex and it's off to the chinlock. A cheap shot from Angle sets up the first suplex from Haas for two. Charlie drapes Edge over the ropes so Shelton can jump over his back and land on Edge. Eh the Beverly Brothers already did it. We hit the Haas of Pain but Benoit makes a quick save.

The half nelson faceplant drops Shelton and the hot tag brings in Benoit to clean house. The suplexes are unleashed and Benoit nails the Swan Dive to Shelton for two. Everything breaks down with Team Angle taking stereo rolling German suplexes until Angle pulls Edge

outside. Benoit Crossfaces Shelton, drawing Angle in for the DQ.

Rating: C+. I would have given Team Angle some more offense though they certainly didn't look weak. The DQ finish protects Benoit and keeps the new team looking strong enough. All that matters here is that Angle now has some backup and hopefully we can keep him FAR away from Big Show.

Angle beats up Tony Chimmel until he announces Team Angle as the winners.

Post break, Paul Heyman is in the ring to brag about how awesome his clients are. That brings him to Lesnar, and it's time for Big Show. Heyman gets right to the point: he wants Big Show vs. Lesnar with the winner going into the Royal Rumble and the loser being left out. Since it's Heyman, this takes a lot longer than it needs to. Cue Lesnar but Matt Hardy and Shannon Moore jump him from behind with a chair. One shot busts Brock open BAD from the back of his head as the villains run off.

Dawn and Al, still in their underwear, go to the limo. You mean they haven't left yet? Anyway, they have a camera to film their honeymoon.

Crash vs. Nunzio

Josh Matthews has replaced Chimmel as ring announcer and looks even dumber than usual. Crash comes in with a high crossbody for two and then the opening bell rings. That's not the most competent referee. Nunzio goes after the arm with a quick armbar and something like a Stunner onto the arm. A rollup gives Crash two but the kickout sends his shoulder into the post. The DDT on the arm (flying armbar) is good enough to give Nunzio the pin.

Matt gives Shannon a pep talk.

Matt Hardy vs. Brock Lesnar

Brock is in a t-shirt and workout pants. Matt, who always stays awake until sunrise on New Year's Eve, tries to have Shannon get in some cheap shots but the still bloody Brock cleans house anyway. A great looking backbreaker sets up a belly to belly, followed by some

powerslams into the corner. Shannon's distraction works as well as you would expect though it does allow Matt to hit a Side Effect. That just earns him a belly to belly, followed by Shannon being thrown on top of Matt. A release F5 plants Moore but Brock walks into the Twist of Fate for two. The F5 finishes Matt a few seconds later.

Rating: D+. It's very fun to watch Lesnar destroy people like they're not even there and if he can do two at once, that's even better. It was entertaining and a good use of Matt and Shannon, both of whom will be over again as soon as Matt does another over the top promo about how awesome Mattitude really is.

Show comes out for the staredown, earning Matt another F5 to end the show.

Overall Rating: D. The wrestling in the middle helps but so much of this show was dominated by the wedding nonsense. Dawn Marie is good looking but she is nowhere near enough to save this story. I still don't know why it's still going but I'm sure we'll be seeing another big part of it next week, eventually leading to Dawn vs. Torrie again.

Other than that we had Bill DeMott and Rikishi getting featured spots. They're building some acts up (Los Guerreros, Cena, Team Angle) and that can lead them to a lot of good places in the future. This wasn't a horrible show but there's no way around that wedding, which ate up more than almost any given match. I'm sure it's a Vince thing but this is the funniest thing he can get behind?

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