

# Monday Night Raw – January 20, 2003 (2017 Redo): THAT MAN HAD A DOCTOR'S NOTE!!!

## Monday Night Raw

Date: January 20, 2003

Location: Dunkin' Donuts Center, Providence, Rhode Island

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

We're past the Royal Rumble and, somehow, the big story still seems to be HHH vs. Scott Steiner for reasons of general torture. After Steiner showed why he shouldn't be allowed to wrestle a watermelon farmer in front of a pair of chickens named Dolores and Walter, it's pretty clear that he's getting a rematch next month at No Way Out. Let's get to it.

We open with the Martin Luther King Jr. Day video. Vince always gets this one in and maybe we can have a D'Lo Brown match to celebrate.

The opening recap looks at Vince McMahon telling Eric Bischoff that he has thirty days to turn the show around or he'll be replaced by Shane McMahon.

Opening sequence.

Here are HHH and Ric Flair to open things up. The announcers immediately start talking about how awesome last night's match was, likely with Vince screaming in their ears the whole time. JR even mentions the most terrifying word in the world: REMATCH. I mean, I thought/hoped I was imagining it when he said HHH had "no way out" last night but I probably need to see my therapist more. Granted when the match put me in therapy in the first place (Which CAN NOT be blamed on Steiner of course. That would just be lunacy.), it kind of defeats the purpose.

HHH talks about how physical the match was last night but at the end, Steiner had to use a sledgehammer to save himself. As they say in the movies, "there ain't gonna be no rematch." Apollo didn't say "there" you

nitwit. Get your Rocky quotes straight. Cue Steiner to say he wants his rematch tonight, despite taped ribs. Are those from carrying HHH last night? I mean, that WHOLE THING was HHH's fault and nothing can be blamed on anyone else so we'll go with that theory.

HHH has a note from his doctor (An apology for the match perhaps?) and can't wrestle tonight so Flair says Batista can do it instead. As I desperately scramble to find that therapist's number, Batista comes out for a distraction so HHH can jump Steiner to little avail. Scott cleans house, despite a minor misstep where they looked to be on the wrong page (HHH'S FAULT!!! HHH'S FAULT!!!).

### Rob Van Dam vs. Jeff Hardy

Imagine the pre-match prep talk. I feel string would be discussed in thorough detail. Jeff starts with a jawbreaker and a running dropkick puts Rob on the floor. The barricade run doesn't work as Rob kicks the leg out, followed by more kicks back inside. The announcers start talking about Chris Jericho in the Rumble for no apparent reason as Jeff gets two off the Whisper in the Wind. Van Dam grabs a Regal Roll and hits a middle rope moonsault, only to miss the Five Star. A Codebreaker of all things sets up the Swanton for two, followed by Rob grabbing a backslide for the pin.

**Rating:** C. The match had the noticeable slips that you would expect from these two but it worked well enough with Jeff not being able to win even with his best move. If nothing else it was cool to see what would become a famous move later on used as something basic here. It's not like Jericho invented it but it's still weird to see so long ago.

Post match Jeff snaps and grabs a chair but throws it down before the swing.

Christian and Christopher Nowinski offer Bischoff good luck with his remaining twenty one days to turn Raw around. I know WWE doesn't think much of its fans, but I think they know that thirty minus seven isn't twenty one. This always made me shake my head back in the day and I still don't get it now. If they just had to set it up to end on Raw, just set it up as four weeks from tonight instead of thirty days, which made the

whole thing confusing. Anyway, there's going to be a bombshell announcement later tonight.

Steiner runs into Randy Orton, who talks about Steiner wanting to be World Champion. Steiner, ever the crazy man, attacks Orton, which threatens his 95% healed shoulder. Dude DON'T MESS WITH HIS MATH SKILLS! Some threats leave Orton shaken.

Chief Morely has Nick Patrick watch the ending to the Tag Team Title match. Patrick admits his mistake but Morely wants a public apology. As opposed to one on national television.

Here are Morely and Patrick for said apology. Patrick gladly does so, but Morely wants the decision reversed. In one of the most laugh inducing lines ever in WWE, Patrick says it's company policy that all referee decisions are final. That's bad even by WWE standards. Morely calls out the Dudley Boyz, who point out that Morely brought the knuckles into the ring in the first place. Morely demands the titles be handed over but Bubba won't give them to a washed up ex-adult star. It's almost table time but William Regal and Lance Storm run in for the save. Bubba gets flapjacked through the table and Morely says let's have a title defense.

#### Tag Team Titles: Dudley Boyz vs. Lance Storm/William Regal

Storm and Regal are challenging and win the titles in less than fifteen seconds.

To clarify, Booker T. and Goldust can't keep the titles for a month but we can do two title changes in twenty four hours. There's no real reason to have Booker and Goldust lose the belts in the first place when you could have had them defend against Storm and Regal at the Rumble and then do this same angle tonight. Why do that though when you can get two more reigns out of it though, thereby making the titles seem even weaker than they already are?

#### Trish Stratus/Hurricane vs. Steven Richards/Victoria

The genders have to match. Hurricane armdrags Richards down to start but Victoria tags herself in and slaps Hurricane in the mask. The threat of a

chokeslam brings Richards back in as the rules are thrown out less than a minute and a half in. Trish comes in and they botch what I think was going to be an electric chair but turned into Trish sitting on the back of Victoria's head. Victoria misses the slingshot legdrop and it's off to Hurricane but the referee didn't see the tag. Trish almost takes the StevieDT but Hurricane makes a save. Stratusfaction ends Victoria, likely setting up another title match. This was a mess.

Bischoff talks to Vince's secretary and again promises a big surprise so Vince should turn the show on. WWE just admitted that the boss, the owner of the company, and the most important man in the wrestling world ISN'T WATCHING HIS FLAGSHIP SHOW. That sums up so many problems in one line. Bischoff throws a dart at a picture of Shane McMahon on a dartboard to really emphasize the idea.

Same Sean O'Haire video from last night.

Here's Bischoff for his big announcement. We see a clip of Steve Austin being named Raw Superstar of the Decade but not being invited to the ceremony. Bischoff says Austin wasn't there because he walked out on Vince McMahon. We've heard Vince and JR's sides of the story so maybe we should hear from Austin. Eric is going to give him the chance to tell his side....IN RAW MAGAZINE!

That's not the big announcement though (thank goodness). Instead, Bischoff is inviting Austin to return at No Way Out. How does that change Raw though? As in Bischoff's whole assignment. Eh I'm sure it makes sense in WWE's mind, which is all that matters. It's not like the fans can make sense of all these brilliant ideas (Want to know what happened? GO BUY THE MAGAZINE!) so take what you can get. Oh and the pay per view is further than 21 days away. In theory he could be safe if he signs Austin back before then, but just say "you have until No Way Out" and this isn't an issue.

3 Minute Warning vs. Goldust/Booker T.

JR calls them 3 Count and, while discussing Test vs. Chris Jericho (which is being treated as a major match for some reason), says Jericho eliminated Shawn Michers last night. Goldust and Jamal get things going

but it's off to Booker before anything goes anywhere. A very hard clothesline turns Booker inside out and all hope is lost.

Back up and Booker superkicks his way back into hope as the match is being ignored for the sake of talking about Austin (fair enough at this point and it's not like Booker and Goldust seem to be going anywhere anytime soon). Jamal breaks up Shattered Dreams and runs Goldust over to hit the neck crank.

Back up and Jamal misses a charge into the corner so Booker can come in to clean house. A double DDT drops the Samoans and it's time for the Spinarooni (With a crowd reaction shot. As in one. On the whole show. Not seventeen per match.) but Jamal superkicks Booker down. Jamal misses a top rope splash (his toes might have grazed Booker if he had "connected") and the ax kick puts him away.

**Rating:** D+. This could have been a lot worse but they're not even trying to hide the fact that Booker T. and Goldust are done with the title picture. I have no idea why the company felt the need to immediately move to the Dudleys, who have done this time after time before. It's not like the upcoming HHH vs. Booker feud needed to be started this early so why not get a little more mileage out of the team?

Video on Chris Jericho's Royal Rumble performance until Shawn Michaels ran back in, allowing Test to eliminate him.

### Chris Jericho vs. Test

Jericho, with a heck of a knot on his head from a Tommy Dreamer cane shot, complains about having his dream stolen. Test sends him over the top for some cat skinning, only to follow up with a gorilla press drop. Jericho grabs a belly to back suplex and we hit the chinlock. Stacy plays cheerleader (playing to her natural skills) and gets Test to his feet for a side slam. The big boot misses so Test backdrops him to the floor. Test gets posted and Jericho grabs a chair, which he uses to hit the post, which Stacy was standing behind. Naturally this is equal to shooting Stacy dead and the match is thrown out.

**Rating:** D. Most of that is due to the horrible ending, which we'll get to

in a minute. The rest of the match was Test doing his really standard power offense and still having no reason to care about him because his big thing is a great looking manager who does lame jokes. This really isn't interesting and that's not the biggest surprise in the world.

Stacy gets taken out on a stretcher while Test shows off his acting skills. She didn't get hit in the head and Jericho didn't hit her. Unfortunately this is going to lead to the Owen Hart voices because this story needs to be all serious instead of something rather bad looking. I get what they're going for, but it's kind of hard to get interested in a story where someone hit a post and damaged the woman who does the Testicles jokes.

Al Snow plugs the Tough Enough finale.

Stacy is still being taken out. They show the worst replay imaginable, which shows the chair hitting the post, which Stacy's HANDS are touching with her head at least six inches away.

Flair gives Batista a pep talk.

#### Tommy Dreamer vs. D'Lo Brown

Singapore Cane match. Before the match, Brown brings out Teddy Long to say that D'Lo isn't going to be one of Dr. King's followers because a lack of aggression never got him anywhere. Last night, Brown was held out of the Royal Rumble and tonight THE MAN has him in this violent match. Starting tonight, the WWE has to be down with the Brown. D'Lo: "Free at last, free at last, free to cane a white boy's a\*\*!"

Dreamer immediately starts caning away but hits the post by mistake. Brown was a few feet away but there's no stretcher brought out. I smell racism. D'Lo canes him a few times, then Dreamer canes him a few times. Tommy hits D'Lo's head shaking legdrop and a DDT, only to dive into a cane to the ribs. The Sky High (the Low Down according to the way off JR) gives D'Lo the pin.

**Rating:** F. This was as good as a suddenly racist D'Lo Brown and Tommy Dreamer caning each other for three and a half minutes was going to be.

Long is a big improvement for the angle but there's only so much he can do with something this stupid. There was no reason for this to be a cane match but at least Brown won.

### Batista vs. Scott Steiner

It's a power match to start (I'm as shocked as you are) with Steiner winning a battle of shoulders. Scott hammers away in the corner and actually uses a belly to belly. I'd have bet on that one being banned. It's so offensive that Randy Orton runs in for the DQ.

Steiner beats up Flair but Batista breaks up the Recliner. HHH comes in as well and beats Scott down (JR: "WHAT ABOUT THE NOTE FROM THE DOCTOR???" ) with the help of his new buddies. Steiner is busted open and Pedigreed, drawing a face pop. The new team (no name yet) poses to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** F+. This was horrible and it's getting clearer and clearer every single week that something really needs to change around here. Above all else, bring back the Intercontinental Title. These matches are just coming and going because there's nothing for most of them to fight over. They're just filling in time with nothing feuds and stories (D'Lo Brown, Test, Hurricane vs. Richards, Booker T./Goldust and so on) because HHH can only fight one guy at a time.

Other than that though, you barely have any good wrestling and now we're setting up for No Way Out which will feature a rematch of one of the worst matches ever and Steve Austin, who was a shell of himself eight or so months ago and could be even worse now. On top of that, you know it's a bad time when your top face can't be trusted to go two minutes in the main event of Raw. This show is in a massive need of a shot of blood or anything for that matter, but I don't see it happening anytime soon.

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