

Smackdown – February 13, 2003: They Have a Way Out

Smackdown

Date: February 13, 2003

Location: Centennial Garden, Bakersfield, California

Commentators: Michael Cole, Tazz

We're less than two weeks away from No Way Out and you can see most of the card from here. The big story coming out of last week is Team Angle, now with a title for each, seemingly getting ready to face Edge/Chris Benoit/Brock Lesnar. Other than that there's always Rock vs. Hulk Hogan so let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

There's another crate addressed to Undertaker.

Charlie Haas vs. Edge

Haas has Paul Heyman with him. Edge takes him down into an armbar to start so Charlie hammers away in the corner as they're doing the opposite of what you would probably expect. Something close to an exploder suplex gives Charlie two, followed by a northern lights suplex for the same.

A double arm crank keeps Edge in trouble for a bit before he pops up with his own suplex to drop Charlie. An enziguri stuns Charlie again and the Edge-0-Matic gets two. Edge gets creative with something like a DDT fisherman's suplex (basically a fisherman's suplex without wrapping Haas' arm around his neck first) for two but Heyman gets on the apron. The spear drops him but Charlie grabs a rollup for the pin.

Rating: C. The ending hurt it a good bit but they're doing a great job of building up Team Angle. They win more often than not and it keeps them from looking weak. Today, a team like them would probably be jobbing every other week in singles matches while WWE blamed them for their horrible work or something like that.

Nathan Jones will be on Smackdown. Not for long that is but he'll be here.

Angle is in Stephanie's office when she comes in. After complimenting her new hair, Angle hands her a rose in a fairly random bit of niceness. He actually goes to kiss her when Brock Lesnar comes in. The staredown ensues so Stephanie announces the six man tag for No Way Out. Angle takes the rose back.

Rikishi vs. Nunzio

Rematch from last week when Nunzio threatened mob connections. Nunzio dives at him before the bell but here are Chuck Palumbo and Johnny the Bull to beat Rikishi down. No match.

Rey Mysterio vs. Matt Hardy

Matt, who always gets more Valentine's Day cards than his brother, doesn't send flowers and only gets chocolates, is down from 230lbs to 222lbs, putting him near the cruiserweight limit of 220. Matt is wrestling in a rubber suit to burn more weight in a creative idea. The extra gear seems to mess with him a bit though as he can't keep up with Rey and gets taken out of the corner with an ankle scissors. A missed charge sends Rey outside though and Shannon Moore gets in a few stomps of his own.

Matt gets two off a gutwrench suplex as Cole suggests Tazz get in one of those rubber suits. Tazz: "Nah Cole I just take a bunch of Stacker II (sponsor at the time)". A surfboard with Matt's boot between Rey's shoulders doesn't get him very far so it's off to a torture rack for a bit better result.

Matt seems to be getting winded though and it's a spring seated senton for no cover. Rey gets two off a springboard split legged moonsault but dives into a Side Effect for the same. Matt is almost completely gassed though and falls to his knees, right into 619 position. The West Coast Pop puts Matt away.

Rating: C+. I like this idea and it gives Matt something to do, which is

more than he's had going on in a long time. If nothing else he's still good with the comedy and this is a good way for him to showcase those skills. That being said, his Cruiserweight Title shot (providing he loses the weight) has already been announced so he shouldn't be losing here.

Matt, dripping with sweat, promises to win the title at No Way Out.

We look back at Brian Kendrick's time in WWE to date.

Kendrick is complaining about his bad luck to Sean O'Haire when Bill DeMott comes up. DeMott doesn't want to hear about it and beats Kendrick up until O'Haire gets in Bill's face for the save.

Chris Benoit vs. A-Train

A-Train tries to take Benoit into the corner to intimidate him. Why he thinks this would work isn't clear and he has to get to the ropes to avoid the Crossface. A-Train slams him down on the ribs and drops an elbow for good measure. A modified Gory Stretch (with a reverse full nelson instead of pulling on the chin) sets up a modified Widow's Peak. A-Train gets two off a Vader Bomb but Benoit slips out of the torture rack. Some good looking German suplexes (Benoit got him WAY up) have A-Train reeling but the Swan Dive misses. The bicycle kick gets two and it's time for the Derailer, only to have Benoit reverse into the Crossface for the tap.

Rating: C. They were beating the heck out of each other here but Benoit was the right choice to carry things as A-Train did all of his power offense. This also helps Benoit going into the pay per view as he's beating people he should beat. A-Train's push continues to be all over the place but at least he's not beating people he shouldn't be.

The Girls Gone Wild boss comes up to Torrie Wilson to offer her a spot on his pay per view special. Torrie agrees, promising to get very wild.

We recap Big Show attacking Undertaker four months ago.

Heyman is in the ring with the crate and hopes Undertaker won't destroy this present like he did to the man of love last week. Cue Undertaker with Heyman immediately looking nervous. Heyman leaves in a hurry and

it's....Kanyon in the box. For some reason he's dressed as Boy George and belts out a little Culture Club. Kanyon: "WHO BETTER THAN KANYON???" Tazz: "That guy looks familiar!" Kanyon gets in some offense but the beatdown is on in a hurry. Undertaker beats on him with a chair as Heyman begs for mercy.

Matt is wearing himself out on an exercise bike to lose more weight.

Funaki is with John Cena and tries to look like a rapper. Cena schools him a bit.

Eddie Guerrero vs. Shelton Benjamin

Joined in progress with Eddie getting out of a top wristlock and snapmaring him to the mat. Back up and a powerslam gives Shelton two, followed by an electric chair for the same. They're certainly working the amateur stuff here, which is easily the best idea for both of them at this point. Shelton grabs a chinlock for a bit, followed by a very high backdrop for two. A belly to belly gives Eddie two in some of his first significant offense. They head to the corner with Eddie getting in a sunset bomb but missing the frog splash. Shelton is right back up with the Dragon Whip for the clean pin.

Rating: B. That's quite the performance from someone who has such little main roster experience. Eddie helped a lot of course and it was very nice to see Shelton get in a ton of offense like this. It's not like Eddie is going to lose anything from this match while Shelton gets a big rub. Good stuff.

LONG video on Rock vs. Hogan, recapping their feud from last year and show of respect after the showdown at Wrestlemania. Now they're fighting again because Hogan is feuding with Vince, who brought Rock back for the match. In other words, the Rock is now just a soldier in Vince's army against Hogan, who he's fighting with because....I have no idea. This is missing from the WWE Network for some reason.

Hugh Hefner tells us that a WWE Diva will be in Playboy soon.

Torrie Wilson vs. Dawn Marie

Bra and panties match with a bunch of Valentine's Day stuff in the ring. During the entrances, Tazz thinks it's going to be Stephanie in Playboy. That might not be the best idea in 2003. Dawn, who is wrestling in a sports bra in the first place, jumps her from behind and takes the shirt off to choke away. Torrie dropkicks her to the floor and gets Dawn's top off, revealing a smaller bra. Dawn's pants come halfway down before they try some rollups for the sake of camera shots.

Rating: D-. I can't call them failures based on how they looked but sweet goodness these things do not hold up well. If nothing else it feels out of place when you have Team Angle and Eddie Guerrero on the show, making this quite the downgrade. They're embarrassing as a wrestling fan and, given that Torrie would be in Playboy in a few months, would become even more obsolete in a hurry.

Nidia runs in post match but Torrie beats both heels down, gets Nidia's pants off and spanks her a bit.

Brock Lesnar vs. John Cena

Brock leaves a chair out for Angle in case he'd like to come to ringside. Cena's rap isn't his best work as he calls Lesnar muscular and stupid. Brock beats him down in a hurry and gets in a hard backbreaker. The belly to belly suplex sends Cena out to the floor and Lesnar does it again for good measure. Brock rips off a turnbuckle pad for no apparent reason and Cena blasts him with the chain for two.

Cena grabs a rear naked choke of all things and even holds on despite being rammed hard into the buckle. Since that doesn't work, Brock picks him up and rams him into two buckles for the break instead. Brock unloads with shoulders to the ribs in the corner and the third belly to belly (so it happened back then too). The F5 is enough for the pin.

Rating: B-. These two have always had a chemistry together and they're always entertaining to watch as a result. Lesnar was way ahead of Cena at this point but you could see the potential in Cena starting to come out. The match was competitive and Cena got to show off a bit, which he needs at this point.

Post match Lesnar calls Angle out because he wants to do this right now. With Kurt not coming, Lesnar F5's Cena into the post. We cut to Kurt in the back, eventually getting sick of this and coming out to the arena. Post break and here's the champ to say they'll give the fans the best match ever. Angle gets in Brock's face but says not tonight. Bakersfield doesn't deserve it and he has a sinus infection. Angle is willing to do it next week so Brock agrees before taking Angle down with a clothesline. Brock loads up the F5 into the post but has to deal with Team Angle. Lesnar stands tall to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. This was a solid wrestling show for the most part, assuming you ignore the women's stuff. No Way Out is looking hit or miss from the Smackdown side but at least we have the good TV leading up. I'm sure the fact that Hogan wasn't on the show had nothing to do with the quality going up either. That match is really starting to stick out as a bad idea, though Scott Steiner vs. HHH will make sure it's not the worst thing on the pay per view. It's a good Smackdown this week though and that's always welcome.

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