

Smackdown – February 27, 2003: Go Stephanie Go

Smackdown

Date: February 27, 2003

Location: Labatt Centre, London, Ontario, Canada

Commentators: Michael Cole, Tazz

We're officially on the road to Wrestlemania and that means it's time to turn things up a lot. Thankfully the main event of Kurt Angle vs. Brock Lesnar for the title is already set, but unfortunately there's that whole broken neck thing that Angle has going on (again). Edge is having similar issues as well and hopefully that's the end of the injury bug issues. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Here's Vince to open us up and he's got some good and bad news for us. First the bad news: Rock won't be here tonight because he's permanently on Raw. As for the good, Hulk Hogan won't be here either due to a "family emergency". Something about his son. Anyway, Hogan has written his own burial by challenging Vince to a match because he has no idea what he's in for. Vince walks us through Sunday's match and promises to show us what happened on Sunday later tonight. He declares that MCMAHONAMANIA is running wild (like that's a new thing) and struts out as only he can.

Funaki/Torrie Wilson vs. Jamie Noble/Nidia

Thankfully the men start as we hear more speculation about one of the women being in Playboy. Jamie gets sent into the corner but comes out with a neckbreaker. It's off to Nidia for some stomping before it's right back to Noble. Funaki gets fired up and pulls Nidia back in before sending them into each other.

A double clothesline drops both of them though as Tazz calls Nidia feisty. Nidia misses a top rope splash and it's off to Torrie for what is totally not a canned pop. She slaps Noble and gets shoved down for her

efforts, earning Noble a baseball slide from Funaki. Cue Dawn Marie for a failed distraction, allowing Torrie to grab a rollup for the pin.

Rating: D. Standard horrible women's action here but at least Funaki and Jamie were in there for the most part. Torrie is getting the push for the sake of Playboy and while I get that, is there any better way than having her wrestle? At least they kept it short, which is rarely a good thing to hear.

Post match Stephanie comes out to say that SHE has negotiated the Playboy deal with Torrie getting the spot. Torrie is VERY happy about this and looks like she just won the Women's Title. So in other words, she's thankful that Stephanie is allowing her to be in the magazine and it's pretty much nothing that Torrie has accomplished.

During the break, Torrie thanked Stephanie again and plugs Girls Gone Wild. Brian Kendrick came up and introduced himself to Stephanie (Stephanie: "Naked boy.") with an idea: he'll wrestle Kurt Angle tonight. Stephanie agrees, saying if he can last five minutes he gets a job.

Nunzio vs. Eddie Guerrero

The team is officially the FBI with Tazz saying he's heard the name before. Eddie runs him over with a shoulder to start and somewhat botches a backflip over Nunzio's back. Nunzio leverages him into the corner and stomps away with Chuck Palumbo adding a trip from the floor. A knee to the head gets two but Eddie gets in a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker for a breather. Eddie's belly to belly gets two but he has to roll through the frog splash. Instead it's a small package with Eddie allegedly grabbing the trunks (it looked like he was just touching them) for the pin.

Rating: C-. Nunzio is way too talented for something as stupid as this version of the FBI. Speaking of which, why is Eddie stuck in this match instead of fighting for a title of some kind? Ah yes, because WE CAN'T HAVE A MIDCARD TITLE FOR HIM TO FIGHT FOR because whatever Raw does, Smackdown has to do too and we wouldn't want HHH to have any contenders to his throne.

The FBI comes in for the beatdown but Rikishi (of course) comes out for

the save.

Cole again hypes the world premiere of the screwing of Hulk Hogan. That might cost them a \$120 million lawsuit.

Paul Heyman comes in to see Stephanie, who has a stipulation for tonight's main event. If Lesnar can defeat Team Angle tonight, he gets any member of the team next week in a cage match. Heyman: "I don't like that." Paul knows he'll pick Kurt and that's not fair five weeks out of Wrestlemania. Heyman leaves and Stephanie gives a pretty weird looking smile.

We look at Edge being laid out at No Way Out. He'll be gone for about a year.

Benoit tells Lesnar to take out Team Angle in revenge for what happened to Edge. Lesnar says he'll win but thinks Benoit should be worried. Don't worry because Benoit has his own friends. That friend is in his dressing room. Brock: "What's up?"

Wrestlemania ad, which I believe marks the debut of Crack Addict on WWE TV. I always wondered why they never said the name of the song on the shows.

Matt Hardy/Shannon Moore vs. Chris Benoit/???

Shannon and Matt, whose pants are a size 34 in the waist and who thinks sweet potatoes are delicious, have to deal with the returning Rhyno as Benoit's partner. Rhyno mauls Shannon to start and hands it off to Benoit for a hard clothesline and a suplex. Matt comes in and doesn't get beaten up as badly, instead taking Benoit down and dropping a leg for two.

As always (including how it would be in his modern run), the fans are WAY into Rhyno as Benoit fights out of a chinlock. Poetry in Motion doesn't work and the hot tag brings in Rhyno to clean house. The spinebuster gets two on Matt and a suplex rocks Moore. Rhyno Gores Matt for the pin.

Rating: D+. And that's a good example of why this company gets so many head shakes. Was there ANY reason to not have Shannon eat the pin here instead of the new Cruiserweight Champion? If nothing else Shannon was

probably going to take a better bump when Rhyno Gored him, but instead we got Matt taking the pin. Of course we did.

Clip of Nathan Jones' interview last week. He's really intense.

Here's Undertaker for a chat. He didn't care for A-Train attacking him on Sunday and says it's time for some consequences. This brings out A-Train, complete with new agent Paul Heyman. Paul calls the triangle choke that Undertaker used illegal and brings out Big Show for the two on one beatdown. Nathan Jones makes the save and I think we have a tag match coming up.

The injured John Cena is on his laptop and promises to make Brock Lesnar's hard drive crash because he's a virus. Everyone knows he's the next big thing and Brock is the great white hype. "Your finish is the F5. Well mine's the FU." And so it begins.

We see the Kendrick and Stephanie segment for no other reason than to show Stephanie (and her low cut top) again.

Kurt Angle vs. Brian Kendrick

Non-title with Kendrick having to tell Tony Chimmel his stats. If Kendrick lasts five minutes, he gets a job. Angle gets down in an amateur position and lets Brian take his best shot. The look on Angle's face (nearing boredom) says it all as he rides Brian on the mat. Now he gets on his knees and puts his hands behind his back so Kendrick kicks him in the jaw. Some forearms have Angle in trouble but it's a belly to belly to cut that off in a hurry.

We're under three minutes to go and a right hand knocks Brian over the top and out to the floor. Back in and the ankle lock is slapped on but released just as quickly. Two minutes left and Kurt picks him up for the Angle Slam, only to drop him back down. An elbow to the face annoys Angle even more but a facebuster gives Kendrick a pretty hot near fall. Angle misses a charge into the post with a minute left but the yet to be named Sliced Bread #2 is broken up. One heck of a clothesline drops Kendrick but he fires off forearms with fifteen seconds left. The Angle Slam gives Kurt the pin with two seconds left on the clock.

Rating: C+. They tried here and it was working very well for what they wanted to do. Angle finishing via pin was the right idea too as having Brian tap would have defeated a lot of the purpose of this. Kendrick has heart but he looks like he's about fifteen years old and there's not much of a way around that.

Post match Angle says Team Angle had nothing to do with Edge's attack. As for Brian, he has guts, though he's not going to make it in this business. Angle tells the fans to give him a hand and then beats him down again, including an F5 with a shout out to Brock.

Here's Sylvan Grenier to be obnoxious and introduce clips from No Way Out. By that I mean the last six and a half minutes of the pay per view with nothing new added. It's the Hulk Up and comeback with the ref bump, Vince's interference, Rock winning and Vince mocking Hogan.

We get an exclusive clip from after the show, which is just Hogan yelling at Stephanie about wanting to beat Vince up.

Next week: Hogan is here and Undertaker vs. Big Show.

Heyman gives Team Angle a pep talk as only he can.

Brock Lesnar vs. Team Angle

Handicap match and if Brock wins, he gets a cage match with any member of Team Angle next week. Haas starts for the team and gets launched into the corner. Brock does it a second time and drives some shoulders into his ribs. Shelton comes in and takes an overhead belly to belly as this is one sided so far.

Some double teaming finally slows Brock down and sends him to the floor, allowing Heyman to stomp away a bit. Angle offers some cheating as well and it's Haas having to make a fast save. Lesnar gets posted for good measure as the numbers game is really starting to take effect. A belly to back suplex gives Charlie two and it's off to a rear naked choke.

That's fine with Brock who climbs to the middle rope and drops backwards for the break. Shelton comes in for the superkick into the German suplex and a near fall but Brock has had it. Team Angle is thrown all over the

ring with Charlie being knocked to the floor. The F5 ends Benjamin without too much effort.

Rating: C-. Is there really nothing else they can do besides having the Tag Team Champions lose in handicap matches? Those are two big matches in a row where they've lost when they have an advantage and it's not doing the once incredibly valuable titles very much good. The match wasn't anything to see either as there wasn't much of a secret about Lesnar winning.

Post match Lesnar goes after Heyman but Angle saves him from the F5. Lesnar grabs the mic and says that he wants Heyman in the cage next week. Angle's grin of relief and Heyman's life flashing before his eyes end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. They were flying through stuff tonight and there wasn't much to get excited about. The show wasn't bad but they're really lacking that must see aspect. The fact that the No Way Out footage was longer than almost all of the matches on the show didn't do it a lot of good either. Not a terrible show but nothing I'm going to remember in a few hours.

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