

Summerslam Count-Up – 2009: Jeff Hardy's Swan(ton) Song

Summerslam 2009

Date: August 23, 2009

Location: Staples Center, Los Angeles, California

Attendance: 17,129

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler, Michael Cole, Todd Grisham, Matt Striker, Josh Matthews

Not a lot has changed in the last year other than some names have risen up the card. Jeff Hardy is the Smackdown Champion and is defending tonight against the on fire CM Punk who is now a heel, bragging about how great he is due to being straightedge. We also have Orton vs. Cena #875 although only their second match here at Summerslam. It's a decent looking card on paper so let's get to it.

The opening video is set up like a movie theater, but DX takes it over by making shadow puppets on the screen. Shawn wins by putting up Abraham Lincoln. They finally break the projector but Shawn says he can fix it. He turns it into a DX highlight video but breaks the camera one more time.

Intercontinental Title: Rey Mysterio vs. Dolph Ziggler

Rey is defending after a long but awesome feud with Jericho. Ziggler pounds him down into the corner before getting two off a powerslam. Dolph throws him over his shoulders to the top but Rey bounces off with a moonsault press for two. Out to the floor and a cameraman is taken out via I think a hurricanrana. Back in and Ziggler catches (kind of) a rana off the top in a buckle bomb for two to take over.

We hit the chinlock before Dolph gets two off a side slam. The jumping elbow gets two and it's back to the chinlock. Back up and Rey drop toeholds him into the corner before, only to have his head taken off by a clothesline for another near fall. A fireman's carry gutbuster gets two and it's back to the chinlock. Rey fights up again and hits a hard kick

to the head for a near fall of his own. Dolph comes back with a dropkick to take down a flying Mysterio for two more as these covers are getting very hot.

Back up and Rey tries to roll up Ziggler's body into a sunset flip but Ziggler falls onto him for two. A wicked clothesline gets two more for the challenger but Rey kicks him into 619 position, only to have Ziggler drop to the floor. Back in and the Fameasser gets two for Dolph but Rey gets the same off a sunset flip.

Rey hits a kind of tornado DDT for two more and an armdrag sets up the 619 but Ziggler avoids the springboard splash. Ziggler gets a quick near fall off the miss and the fans are split on who to cheer for. A kick to Rey's head sends him to the apron so Ziggler loads up a top rope gutbuster, only to have Rey counter into a hurricanrana in mid air to retain the title.

Rating: B+. Excellent opener here with Ziggler being able to go move for move with one of the best high fliers of all time. It was clear that Dolph was going to be a big deal and this was a great example of why. Rey was on fire at this point but he would be derailed by a Wellness violation a few weeks later, forcing him to drop the title to John Morrison.

Jack Swagger and MVP are in the back. Swagger says his match with MVP tonight is a culture clash between the All American American and an ex-con. MVP is nothing but a stepping stone but MVP says he made some bad decisions. Tonight he's teaching Swagger a lesson and the teacher is an MVP.

Jack Swagger vs. MVP

MVP jumps over Swagger in the corner and hits a quick clothesline for two to start. Swagger rolls to the floor to avoid the Ballin Elbow, only to be caught by a suicide dive. Back in and Swagger gets in some shots to the ribs to take over followed by a forearm to the back. MVP counters another shot with an elbow to the face, only to get caught in an abdominal stretch.

A hard clothesline puts MVP down for two and it's off to a camel clutch. MVP stands up and breaks the hold with an electric chair for two. This is really basic stuff and the fans aren't all that thrilled. Back up and MVP pops him in the jaw with a right hand, setting up the Ballin Elbow for two. A big boot in the corner sets up the Playmaker for the pin on Swagger.

Rating: D. The match wasn't even that bad but it was very dull. Neither guy did anything special out there and it was about six minutes of boring, yet acceptable, wrestling. Swagger would go on to a world title the following year for reasons no one can quite fathom while MVP would do nothing of note for the rest of his WWE run.

Luke Perry is here.

Video on celebrities guest hosting Raw. Did we really have to relive this stupid idea?

Nancy O'Dell from Access Hollywood is here to talk about her ALS charity. No one cares. At all. She interviews Freddy Prinze Jr., one of the recent guest hosts. O'Dell sounds like any other celebrity who has never watched a wrestling show before.

Tag Titles: Chris Jericho/Big Show vs. Cryme Tyme

Jericho and Show (I can't stand those combined names) are defending and the belts are unified at this point, meaning the champions have two belts apiece. Jericho says he and Show are the real celebrities here tonight and that's about it. JTG (how is he still employed in 2013? Seriously, I want an answer to that) starts against Jericho and a nice flip neckbreaker gets two on Chris. A quick Walls attempt is countered and JTG hits a middle rope leg lariat for two.

Todd Grisham: "They bring the right kind of flava eh JR?" JR: "Flava? Like barbecue or cheddar?" Off to Big Show who knocks JTG into the corner and puts on a hard headlock. JTG gets up a pair of boots in the corner before bringing in the much bigger Shad Gaspard. Jericho charges in but gets caught in a gorilla press. The distraction is enough to let Show run Shad over to take control again. A hard chop in the corner puts Shad down

and it's back to the Canadian.

Shad gets in a jawbreaker but Jericho is smart enough to knock JTG to the floor before there's a hot tag. Show puts on a full nelson but throws Gaspard down to bring Jericho back in. We hit the chinlock before Shad fights up and hits a powerslam to put both guys down. The hot tag brings in JTG but the fans don't care at all. Everything breaks down and a clothesline sends Shad and Show to the floor. JTG is put in the Walls but makes the rope, only to be knocked out by Big Show to retain the titles.

Rating: C-. The match was ok but I don't think anyone believed the titles were in jeopardy. Cryme Tyme was a fun team (on occasion) but most of the time they were jobbers to the stars. Jericho and Big Show at least gave the tag titles some fresh life for a few months so I can't complain about them all that much. The match was standard stuff though.

Punk has a screenplay called the Jeff Hardy Story. In the movie, Jeff survives and beats Punk tonight in the TLC match. That's as phony as everyone here in LA, where the only real person is Punk himself. Punk goes on a rant against America's obsession with cool pop culture and says no one makes movies about him because he doesn't support the Hollywood lifestyle. Punk is FEELING IT here.

Kane vs. Great Khali

Here's a Wrestlemania rematch that no one was asking for. Kane is the heel here and has attacked Khali's brother a few times before this. Khali shoves him into the corner to start and throws Kane out to the floor. Back in and Khali clotheslines him down but misses a legdrop, allowing Kane to hit a low dropkick for two. Both guys break up chokeslams and Khali takes over again.

He pounds Kane on the mat for two and hits a hard chop in the corner. Khali charges (and I use that word loosely) into a boot in the corner, allowing Kane to hit the top rope clothesline for two. We hit the chinlock before Khali makes a slow motion comeback and chops Kane down for two. Kane pulls Runjin Singh (Khali's brother) in and the distraction lets Kane dropkick Khali's knee. A bad looking DDT is enough for Kane to get the pin.

Rating: D-. Erg why do they keep doing these battles of the giants when they know they're going to suck? Khali was getting so slow at this point and it was easy to see where the insults about his abilities were coming from. Kane would float around for most of the next year until he saved Undertaker and won the world title as a result.

Slash, Robert Patrick and Maria Menunos are here.

We recap DX vs. Legacy. Rhodes and DiBiase had been destroying HHH for months so he made a call to Shawn. HHH then had to get Shawn out of his job as a short order cook (don't ask) and tonight is the big reunion match against Legacy.

Legacy vs. D-Generation X

DX comes in on a tank, trailing behind a bunch of soldiers on an Army jeep. Ok points for an AWESOME entrance. HHH starts with DiBiase as Ted fires off right hands in the corner. They have even less effect than you would expect so HHH suplexes him down and drops a knee for two. Off to Cody who walks into the high knee to the face from the Game and slaps Shawn as a result. Shawn gets the tag to a big pop but gets slapped again after running the ropes a bit.

Fed up, Shawn tackles Cody down but gets pounded in the face a few more times. Shawn comes back with a Thesz Press and right hands to another big reaction. The Band is tuned up but Cody bails to the floor and comes back in to a headlock. A belly to back suplex puts Shawn down and it's off to DiBiase to keep up the punching motif. Ted slams him down to stay on Shawn's back but Michaels gets a quick neckbreaker for a breather.

The hot tag brings in HHH to clean part of the house but Cody breaks up a Pedigree attempt. Everything breaks down and HHH backdrops Michaels over the top and onto Cody. Ted gets in a cheap shot on HHH to take over, meaning we're in for a long one here. Legacy takes over on the Game in the corner and the double teaming begins. DiBiase hooks a long chinlock, but HHH keeps fighting to get to Shawn. See how easily that can be done? Instead of just laying on the mat until it was time for the comeback, HHH is constantly moving and trying to keep the fans alive. That's such a lost art and it's rather sad.

Anyway HHH suplexes out of the hold but Cody comes in with a DDT to stop the tag to Michaels. Off to a front facelock and of course this time HHH lays on the mat after I praised him for one of the few times after the year 2000. HHH powers out of the hold but DiBiase breaks up another hot tag. You know HHH isn't going to stand for that for very long so he launches Ted over the top and out to the floor and finally makes the tag to Shawn.

House is really cleaned now with Shawn picking Rhodes apart. The atomic drop sets up the flying forearm but DiBiase breaks up the nipup attempt. Everything breaks down and HHH sends DiBiase into the stands as Cody goes up, only to miss a top rope elbow. Shawn loads up his own elbow but gets crotched down onto the buckle. He can still block a superplex though and now the elbow launches, only to hit Cody's knee. Shouldn't that hurt the leg a lot more than Shawn?

There's no DiBiase to tag so Shawn gets up and puts on a Figure Four, only to have DiBiase make the save. HHH can't hit a Pedigree as Cody takes him down and actually hits Cross Rhodes on Shawn for two. Now a Pedigree connects on Cody but DiBiase hits Dream Street (cobra clutch slam) on Shaw. HHH and Ted fight on the floor as both guys are down in the ring. Both guys get up at the same time and it's Sweet Chin Music to knock Cody senseless for the collapsing pin from Shawn.

Rating: B+. Another excellent match here with all four guys working the tag team formula to perfection. Shawn continues to be able to time a comeback like no one ever could and HHH was clicking tonight. Legacy looked great and would actually beat DX in the next month's match. I was surprised by how well the rookies looked here and DX actually had to sweat a bit here. I wouldn't say they were in jeopardy but it wasn't an easy win by any stretch.

ECW Title: Christian vs. William Regal

Christian is defending. Remember Matt Hardy vs. Mark Henry going 32 seconds last week? This is a quarter of that as Christian grabs the Killswitch as Regal is taking his robe off for the pin to retain.

Post match Regal's heavies Vladimir Kozlov and Ezekiel Jackson lay out

Christian so Regal can put on the Regal Stretch.

Video on the Summerslam festivities in Los Angeles.

We recap Orton vs. Cena. Orton has dominated the year and Cena is the latest guy to try to take the title. Not much here but do these two really need a backstory?

Raw World Title: John Cena vs. Randy Orton

Orton is defending. Cena takes him down with a front facelock but Orton counters into a hammerlock. Randy takes him into the corner and kicks at the ribs a bit, cuing a Cena comeback with rights and lefts. Orton comes back with an elbow to the face and his VERY slow stomping. This is the main criticism of Orton around this time: he wrestled in slow motion and it makes for very dull matches. The big knee drop to the chest gets two.

Cena comes back with some right hands but walks into the backbreaker for two. We hit the chinlock and the dueling chants begin. Cena finally powers up and initiates his finishing sequence. The Shuffle connects but Orton escapes the FU into the powerslam (NOT A SCOOP SLAM COLE, YOU STUPID STUPID MAN!) for two. Orton misses a knee drop but Cena's shoulder block only hits air, sending him out to the floor. The Elevated DDT is good for two as Orton keeps things slow.

Cena gets in another shot and pops up top for the Fameasser, good for two. Orton grabs the ropes to block the FU and a double clothesline puts them both down. They slug it out with Cena taking over and speeding things up, but Orton shoves the referee for the LAME DQ. To be fair though it was the first fast paced thing he did all match.

Lillian, Rhodes Scholar that she is, calls Cena the new champion before saying Vince gave her word that the match restarts and if Orton gets DQ'd again he loses the title. This would be an entirely pointless bit that stopped the match cold. Back in and Orton takes over before whipping Cena into the steps. Orton slams him down and goes to get the title and walk out. We get the same announcement and the match continues again.

Back in and the STF, RK0 and FU are all countered and Orton grabs a

rollup with his feet on the ropes for the pin. As you might expect, we're STILL not done as a second referee comes out and tells the first what happened. So on the third restart Cena puts on the STF but a "fan" runs in for a distraction, stopping things cold again. Cena walks around with his hands on his hips but Orton comes in and hits an RKO to retain the title. For real this time.

Rating: D. On top of the INSANE overbooking, the match was really boring with Orton being his usual slow self. These two would feud forever and trade the title back and forth. The matches would get better but people were sick of seeing them fight at the end. This match was a great example of how overthinking can screw up a match. Brett DiBiase was the fan but that was never acknowledged on TV and I don't think it was ever addressed again.

We recap the main event. This is a pure culture clash with Jeff Hardy being the free spirit and Punk being the serious straightedge guy who lives a very strict life. Punk cashed in MITB against Hardy at Extreme Rules but Jeff won the title back two months later. This gets the music video treatment with a song featuring lyrics of "I don't want to be like you." Nice touch.

Smackdown World Title: Jeff Hardy vs. CM Punk

TLC match here. They fight over a lockup to start until Punk takes him into the corner for some knees to the chest. He stomps Hardy down and throws him to the floor before grabbing the first chair. A shot to the ribs and back allows Punk to go up but Hardy makes a quick save. Hardy stomps him down in the corner and hits the slingshot dropkick before going up. This time it's Punk making the save but Hardy sends him into the ladder to put both guys down.

Back up and Hardy loads up Poetry in Motion but Punk drops him onto the open chair to take over. A series of ladder shots to the back have Hardy in big trouble. Punk sends him to the floor and hits a suicide dive but misses a chair shot. Hardy sends him into the post and gets in a chair shot to the elbow to take over. This is a slower paced match so far which is usually the best way to go about TLC matches. Now Poetry In Motion

hits against the barricade and Punk is in trouble.

Hardy puts him on a table but Punk moves before Hardy can splash him through it, sending Hardy down in a big crash. We get another ladder in the ring as JR calls this a carcinogenic match. Punk goes up but Jeff literally jumps over him to go after it himself, only to get caught in an electric chair, only to counter that into a sunset bomb to put both guys down. The champion goes up first but Punk shoves him onto the corner in a SCARY landing with Jeff's leg hitting the rope.

Punk says on him with a superplex onto the ladder in another cringe inducing landing. Somehow Jeff snaps off a quick Twist of Fate but the Swanton hits knees. Punk hits the running knee in the corner but the bulldog is countered by Hardy throwing Punk over the top and through a table. Jeff starts to climb but Punk is back up to dropkick Hardy off the ladder. They head outside with Punk's knees being sent into the steps, allowing Hardy to go NUTS on Punk with a chair.

Hardy loads up a table next to the ring and this Punk in the head with part of the announce table and a monitor. A chair shot puts Punk down again as Hardy is in full control. Jeff sets up the big ladder and hits an INSANE Swanton Bomb through Punk through the announce table. That looked NUTS but the crash was great. Both guys are checked on as the stretcher is brought out. Hardy is taken out but Punk is crawling towards the ladder. Jeff gets off the stretcher and goes after Punk, only to be kicked off the ladder in another big crash, giving Punk the title.

Rating: A-. This was an excellent war with a great story being told: Punk played it safe while Hardy lived for the moment and lost the title as a result. The Swanton spot looked amazing and it was the last straw for Hardy as he just couldn't keep getting up from all these crashes. Awesome match here and a great bit of storytelling.

Punk stands over Hardy with the title in the air and the lights go off. A gong strikes and the lights come up with Undertaker in Hardy's place. He hits a huge chokeslam on Punk and poses on the stage to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. There's some bad stuff on here but the good stuff far outweighs it. Its biggest problem is the Orton vs. Cena match which was

slow and dull leading up to the STUPID ending. The other big matches delivered though and the opener is excellent. The show is worth watching, but pop in the Cena vs. Orton match from Breaking Point instead. Good show here that could have been a classic with a better Raw Title match.

Ratings Comparison

Dolph Ziggler vs. Rey Mysterio

Original: A-

Redo: B+

Jack Swagger vs. MVP

Original: C

Redo: D

Chris Jericho/Big Show vs. Cryme Tyme

Original: D+

Redo: C-

Kane vs. Great Khali

Original: D+

Redo: D-

D-Generation X vs. Legacy

Original: A

Redo: B+

William Regal vs. Christian

Original: N/A

Redo: N/A

John Cena vs. Randy Orton

Original: B-

Redo: D

CM Punk vs. Jeff Hardy

Original: A

Redo: A-

Overall Rating

Original: A-

Redo: B

The Cena vs. Orton match carries or sinks this show depending on how you look at it.

Here's the original review if you're interested:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/08/12/history-of-summerslam-count-up-2009-punk-in-another-main-event-3/>

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